IMPAIRED DRIVING PROGRAM

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IMPAIRED DRIVING IN ALBERTA:

A FIVE YEAR PERSPECTIVE (1984 – 1988)

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(1984 - 1988)

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I EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Impaired driving is a serious social problem that continues to cause the injuries and deaths of Albertans. As a result, it has become an increasing cause of concern to the citizens of the province. The primary objectives of this paper are to describe the magnitude of the impaired driving problem in Alberta and to increase the public's awareness and knowledge of this serious social problem.

A. Alcohol Consumption

Albertans spend an increasing amount of money each year ($942 million in 1987) on alcohol products. However, possibly due to the rising costs of alcoholic beverages as well as lifestyle changes, the consumption of alcohol in Alberta is declining. Alcohol consumption in Alberta remains above the national rate, with Alberta having the third highest level of absolute alcohol consumption per capita of the 18 year old and over population of all the provinces and the third highest ratio in Canada after the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

B. Traffic Collisions, Injuries And Fatalities

A large number of serious traffic collisions occur in Alberta every year. In 1988, a total of 110,264 traffic collisions were reported, including 395 fatal collisions and 12,728 non-fatal injury collisions. As a result of such collisions, 464 persons were killed and 18,777 persons were injured. Fatal and non-fatal injury collisions have kept relatively stable during the period 1984-1988. In 1988 over 37% of fatal collisions and 16.4% of injury collisions were alcohol related. In total, alcohol related collisions resulted in 179 people being killed and 3,441 persons being injured.

Reported data indicates that nearly 30% of drivers in fatal collisions and over 11% of drivers in injury collisions had been involved with alcohol. Over 85% of drinking drivers involved in fatality and injury collisions are male. Males and females in their 20's account for nearly one third of drinking drivers involved in fatal and injury collisions. The male 16-24 age group is significantly over represented in the alcohol related collision problem.

C. Persons Charged With Impaired Driving

The number of persons in Alberta charged with impaired driving has declined from 24,907 in 1984 to 18,103 in 1988, a reduction of 27%. When controlling for population size, Alberta has the highest number of persons charged per 100,000 of total population of all the provinces (excluding the territories) and is 61.5% higher than the national rate. During the 1984-1988 period, police forces located throughout the province operated a Checkstop program to detect and deter impaired driving that, on average, checked over 437,000 vehicles each year.

D. Punishment For Impaired Driving

Licence suspensions for impaired driving convictions have been decreasing from 19,775 in the 1985/86 fiscal year to 17,160 in the 1988/89 fiscal year, a decrease of 13.3%. One third of such suspensions were for offenders convicted of repeat impaired driving offences. Sentenced admissions to Alberta correctional centres increased from 1985/86 to 1987/88 by nearly 20% and while experiencing a drop during the 1988/89 fiscal year, were still 6% above the 1985/86 figure. The rate of sentenced admissions per 1000 persons charged has also increased from 1985/86 to 1988/89 by 28.3%. Additionally, it is noticeable that sentences given for impaired driving offences have become more severe. Sentenced categories of 3 months and over have all experienced increased useage. The largest increase occurred in the 3-6 month sentence category where the portion of sentenced admissions in this category increased from 12.5% in 1985/86 to 17.9% in 1988/89.

E. Treatment

During the 1988/89 fiscal year, nearly 13,000 impaired drivers undertook some form of treatment in Alberta - this represents a 27% decrease in treatment from the 1985/86 fiscal year. Of those 13,000 drivers, 25% were classified as repeat offenders. It would appear that the repeat offender continues to be an important element of the impaired driving problem.

F. Impaired Driving Profiles

The available demographic data supports the general notion of an impaired driver being a single male in his early to mid 20's, probably employed in a lower status occupational group, with some high school education.

Although the typical impaired driving offender is in the 20-29 year range, it should be remembered that the 18-21 age group is significantly over represented in the impaired driving population.

G. The Social And Economic Consequences Of Impaired Driving

Although no attempt can be made to evaluate the cost of human suffering that results from impaired driving collisions, estimates can be made of the economic cost to society from such fatal, injury and property damage collisions.

In 1983, British Columbia developed an estimated societal cost for collisions resulting from drinking and driving. These figures have been adjusted using the Canadian Consumer Price indices for 1983 and 1988, to allow for inflation, costs per collision victim for 1988 were as follows: fatal - $688,402; serious injury - $461,052; moderate injuries - $4,504; property damage only - $1,797.

H. Conclusions

Albertans spent over $942 million on alcohol in 1988 and this figure keeps rising annually. Although the overall consumption of alcohol in the province is falling, Alberta still consumes more than the national average. The number of traffic collisions in the province appears to be slowly increasing although the number of fatality and injury collisions and the number of actual fatalities and injuries is declining slightly. The number of alcohol related fatality and injury collisions occurring has remained relatively stable over the past five years although a slight increase in fatalities and a slight decrease in injuries is noticeable. Police reports indicate that about 30% of drivers involved in fatal accidents and 11% of drivers involved in injury accidents had been drinking.

The number of persons charged with impaired driving is declining, but controlling for population size, Alberta still has the highest charge rate of all the provinces. Likewise, the number of driver licences suspended because of an impaired driving conviction is declining.

Contrary to decreases experienced in the number of persons charged with impaired driving, the number of persons sentenced to imprisonment for impaired driving offences is increasing. In addition, these sentences for persons convicted of impaired driving offences appear to be increasing in severity.

II INTRODUCTION

A. Preamble

Impaired driving is a serious social problem that continues to cause the injuries and deaths of Albertans. As a result, it has become an increasing concern to the citizens of the province. The Department of the Solicitor General, with responsibility for the Impaired Driving Countermeasures Committee and its mandates in the areas of law enforcement, driver management and corrections has been given the responsibility for coordinating and directing the impaired driving initiatives in Alberta.

B. Objectives

The objectives of this paper are to:

1. Collate information from a variety of sources in the province into one document;
2. Describe the magnitude of the impaired driving problem in Alberta;
3. Increase the public's awareness and knowledge of this serious social problem;
4. Provide a useful collection of pertinent data for those individuals working in the field.

C. Mandate of the Impaired Driving Countermeasures Committee

The Impaired Driving Countermeasures Committee, with representation from other government departments, police, community groups, private sector agencies and interest groups and the public at large, was established to act in an advisory capacity to the Solicitor General.

The specific mandate of the committee is to:

1. Conduct research and develop programs to increase the probability of the apprehension and conviction of persons who drive while impaired or who drive while under suspension following an impaired driving conviction;
2. Develop and disseminate public information programs designed to increase public awareness of the legal, economic, social and human consequences of driving while impaired.

D. Program Initiatives

A number of programs have been researched and developed by the Department of the Solicitor General working in conjunction with the Impaired Driving Countermeasures Committee. These initiatives are diverse, comprehensive and approach the problem of impaired driving from different perspectives. In the area of enforcement, such program initiatives include, but are not limited to:

1. Increased detection activity under the Checkstop program;
2. The introduction of vehicle immobilization devices;

3. The implementation of an ignition interlock program where a device which requires a breath alcohol test prior to starting a vehicle is installed in a convicted impaired driver's vehicle;
4. The establishment of an administrative licence suspension program.

Prevention and educational initiatives include:

1. The production of an impaired driving video which depicts the social, economic, legal and human costs of impaired driving;
2. The development and organization of an international congress on drinking and driving;
3. The establishment of an awards program which recognizes outstanding contributions in the battle against impaired driving;
4. Supporting groups such as Teenagers Against Drinking Drivers (T.A.D.D.) and People Against Impaired Drivers (P.A.I.D.) in their various community based initiatives.

Community and public awareness initiatives include:

1. Increased grant funding to community groups involved in the development and delivery of impaired driving programs in their community;
2. The development and implementation of a provincial designated driver program;
3. The establishment of a hospital tour program for young suspended drivers;
4. The evaluation of safe ride and report an impaired driver programs;
5. The production of information for the public in the form of news releases, brochures, billboards campaigns, signs, banners and other related promotional material.

E. Government Agencies Involved With The Impaired Driving Problem

The following governmental agencies are involved with the impaired driving program in Alberta either by having an operational role, an information gathering and analysis role or a funding role:

1. Department of the Attorney General - responsible for prosecuting persons charged with impaired driving offences. Also responsible for maintaining automated systems that record court and charge related data for accused and convicted persons.

2. Department of Transportation and Utilities (Motor Transport Services and Transportation Safety Branch) - charged with the collection and dissemination of provincial traffic collision statistics resulting in death, injury or property damage.

3. Department of the Solicitor General - responsible for law enforcement, driver management (including the licencing of drivers and the registration of motor vehicles) and corrections.

4. Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC) - responsible for the development and delivery of programs which prevent or treat drug and alcohol abuse. In the case of impaired drivers, AADAC is responsible for providing "Planning Ahead" and "IMPACT" courses for first time offenders and repeat offenders respectively and for collecting demographic data respecting such impaired driving offenders.

5. Alberta Liquor Control Board (ALCB) - responsible for administering the sale of alcohol in the Province and for maintaining related statistics.

6. Police Agencies (RCMP and Municipal) - responsible for detecting and charging impaired driving offenders. Also responsible for providing statistical information on accused and charged persons.

7. Statistics Canada - responsible for the collection and analysis of national data in a variety of program areas including impaired driving (primarily through the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics).

8. Health and Welfare Canada - responsible for the National Impaired Driving Program which develops and funds Canada-wide programs. Also responsible for providing a regional grant program which provides funds to community groups developing new initiatives to combat impaired driving.

III IMPAIRED DRIVING - CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

A. Impaired Driving As A Criminal Offence

Impaired driving is a generic title used to describe a variety of driving related criminal offences, tried pursuant to and punishable under the Criminal Code of Canada.

1. Operation of a Motor Vehicle, Vessel or Aircraft While Impaired or With More Than 80 mg of Alcohol in the Blood

   Section 253 of the Criminal Code of Canada states that:

   "Every one commits an offence who operated a motor vehicle or vessel, or operates or assists in the operation of an aircraft or has the care or control of a motor vehicle, or aircraft whether it is in motion or not,

   a) while his ability to operate the vehicle, vessel or aircraft is impaired by alcohol or a drug; or
   b) having consumed alcohol in such a quantity that the concentration thereof in his blood exceeds eighty milligrams of alcohol in one hundred millilitres of blood."

   This section establishes the offences of 'Impaired Driving' and 'Driving With Greater Than 80 mg of Alcohol in the Blood' - the two most common impaired driving offences - and statutorily sets the national legally acceptable blood alcohol concentration.

2. Refusing to Provide a Breath Sample or Blood Sample

   Section 254 of the Criminal Code of Canada establishes who may take and analyze blood and breath samples and which instruments are approved for the testing of such samples. This section also establishes the grounds whereby a peace officer may reasonably request a person to take a breathalyzer test or give a blood sample.

   Subsection 5 of section 254 states that:

   "Every one commits an offence who, without reasonable excuse, fails or refuses to comply with a demand made to him by a peace officer under this section."

   This section establishes the third impaired driving offence - namely that of Refusing to Provide a Breath or Blood Sample on the Request of a Peace Officer.

   Sections 256 and 257, respectively refer to the means of obtaining blood samples and the rights of medical practitioners, and qualified technicians in the taking of blood samples.

B. Punishment For Conviction Of Impaired Driving

Section 255 of the Criminal Code of Canada establishes the minimum penalties for persons convicted of impaired driving offences. It also identifies the offences of "Impaired Driving Causing Bodily Harm" and "Impaired Driving Causing Death" and establishes the punishment for these more serious forms of impaired driving.

Section 259 introduces a "Mandatory Order of Prohibition" which is an order made by the Court in addition to the sentence already passed. This court order prohibits the offender from operating a motor vehicle, vessel or aircraft in Canada for certain established periods of time.

In addition to the sentences and Orders of Prohibition for impaired driving offences established under the Criminal Code of Canada each province has legislation which enables it to suspend the driver's licence of the offender for specified lengths of time. In Alberta, the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, under the authority of the Motor Vehicle Administration Act, is responsible for the suspension of driving privileges.

A court prohibition and a Motor Vehicle Administration Act (M.V.A.A.) suspension are not necessarily of equal length for the same offence. Both the court imposed prohibition and the Motor Vehicle Administration Act suspension will run concurrently to their respective conclusion, and whichever sanction is greater in length will take precedence with respect to the date the offender becomes eligible for licence reinstatement.

1. Punishment for a First Offence of Impaired Driving

A driver convicted of a first impaired driving offence under the Criminal Code of Canada will be subject to a fine of not less than three hundred dollars, and a prohibition from driving for a period of not more than three years, and not less than three months. In addition to the court ordered prohibition, the offender will receive a mandatory twelve month suspension from driving in Alberta under the provincial Motor Vehicle Administration Act.

The offender must attend a one day education course aimed at increasing knowledge about alcohol use and abuse entitled "Planning Ahead" offered by the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission.

2. Punishment for a Second Offence of Impaired Driving

A driver convicted of a second impaired driving offence under the Criminal Code of Canada will be subject to imprisonment for not less than fourteen days, and a prohibition from driving for a period of not more than three years and not less than six months. In addition to the court ordered prohibition, the offender will receive a three year suspension from driving in Alberta under the provincial Motor Vehicle Administration Act.

The offender must attend a 48 hour intervention program for assessment of his/her use and abuse of, and attitude towards, alcohol prior to licence reinstatement. This is an intensive weekend small group dynamics counselling program entitled "IMPACT", also offered by the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission.

3. Punishment for a Third or Subsequent Offence of Impaired Driving

A driver convicted of a third or subsequent impaired driving offence under the Criminal Code of Canada will be subject to imprisonment for not less than ninety days, and a prohibition from driving for a period of not more than three years, and not less than one year. The offender will receive a five year mandatory suspension from driving in Alberta under the authority of the provincial Motor Vehicle Administration Act.

Third-time offenders must appear at a hearing conducted by the quasi-judicial Driver Control Board, established under the Motor Vehicle Administration Act. The hearing is held to determine if the convicted impaired driver must complete any additional requirements imposed by the Board before their licence is reinstated after the statutory suspension has expired. The total driving record and any treatment taken is reviewed at this hearing. A driver may be suspended by the Board for an indefinite period of time. Such suspensions may be appealed to the Court of Queen's Bench.

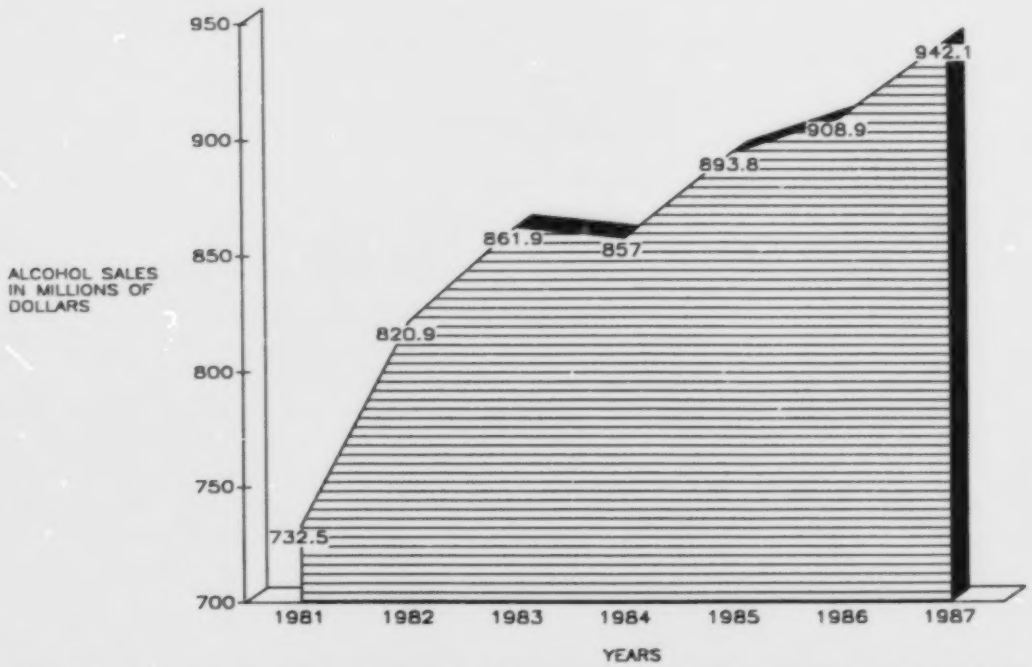
IV ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

A. The Amount Of Money Spent On Alcohol In Alberta (1981 to 1987)

The data used in this section of the report covers alcohol consumption for the period 1981 to 1987. The data for subsections A and B of this section is derived from the Alberta Liquor Control Board Annual Reports (1982 - 1988). The data contained in subsection C is derived from the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission

The total amount of money spent on alcohol in Alberta has been steadily increasing since 1981. A 28.6% increase in the total amount of money spent on alcohol has occurred between 1981 and 1987 (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1
ALCOHOL SALES IN ALBERTA 1981 – 1987



During the year ending January 5, 1988, over $942 million was spent on alcohol in Alberta. Of this amount, approximately $409 million was for the purchase of spirits and $137 million for the purchase of wines. Of all the alcohol sold in Alberta by the Alberta Liquor Control Board (ALCB), 71% ($668 million) was purchased by the public at 211 A.L.C.B. stores, 15 retail beer outlets, 13 privately owned wine boutiques and 4 winery stores. The remaining 29% ($274 million) was purchased by 5,563 licensees for licensed establishment sales. These figures exclude alcohol brought in from out of the province by residents and visitors and alcoholic beverages produced at home.

The latest figures available indicate that in 1987 the amount of money spent on alcohol in Alberta was equivalent to every person in the province aged 18 years and over spending $551 per year on the purchase of alcohol.

B. The Amount Of Alcohol Consumed In Alberta (1981 to 1987)

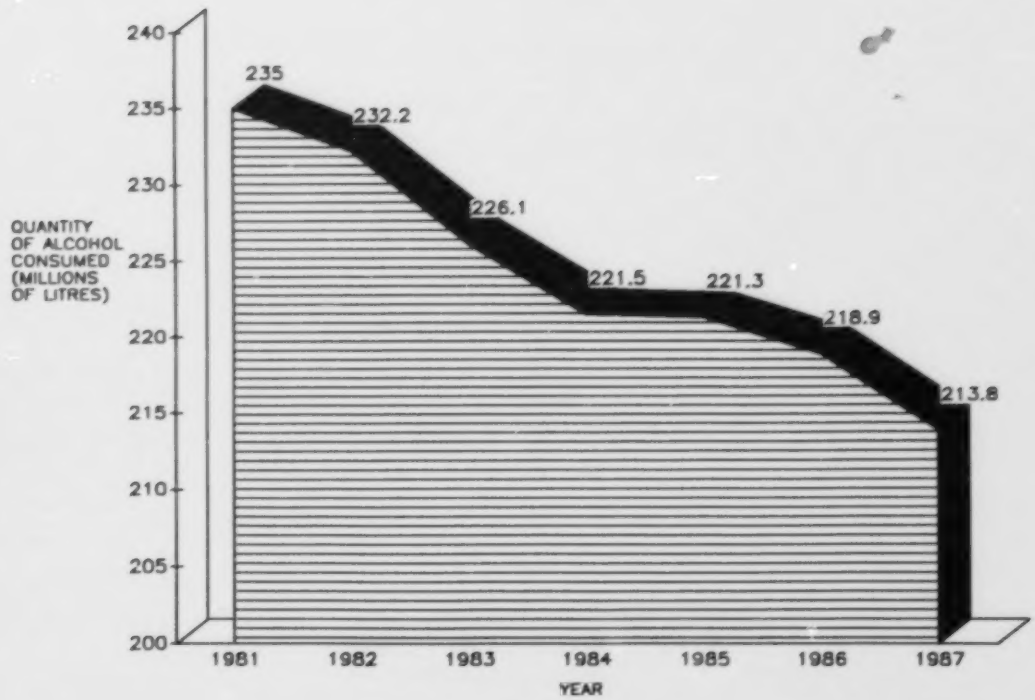
In contrast to the amount of money spent on purchasing alcoholic beverages - which has increased from 1981 - the actual quantity of alcohol consumed in Alberta has steadily declined since 1981 (see Figure 2).

During the 12 months ending January 5, 1988, Albertans consumed in excess of 213 million litres of alcoholic beverages. Of these beverages, 172 million litres were beer products, 22 million litres were wine products and 20 million litres were spirits. This is equivalent to every person aged 18 years and over in the province drinking 128 litres of alcoholic beverages throughout the year.

When controlling for population increases and decreases since 1981 the per capita consumption of alcohol in the province also reflects a steady decline during that period.

Similarly, when controlling for the different types of alcoholic beverages purchased with different alcohol contents and by only counting the actual absolute alcohol consumed, the latest available statistics indicate that in 1985 the per capita consumption of alcohol by Albertans 18 years and older was 12.31 litres of absolute alcohol per person. This equates to 724 bottles of beer per person per year - a reduction from the 1981 figure which was 876 bottles consumed per person.

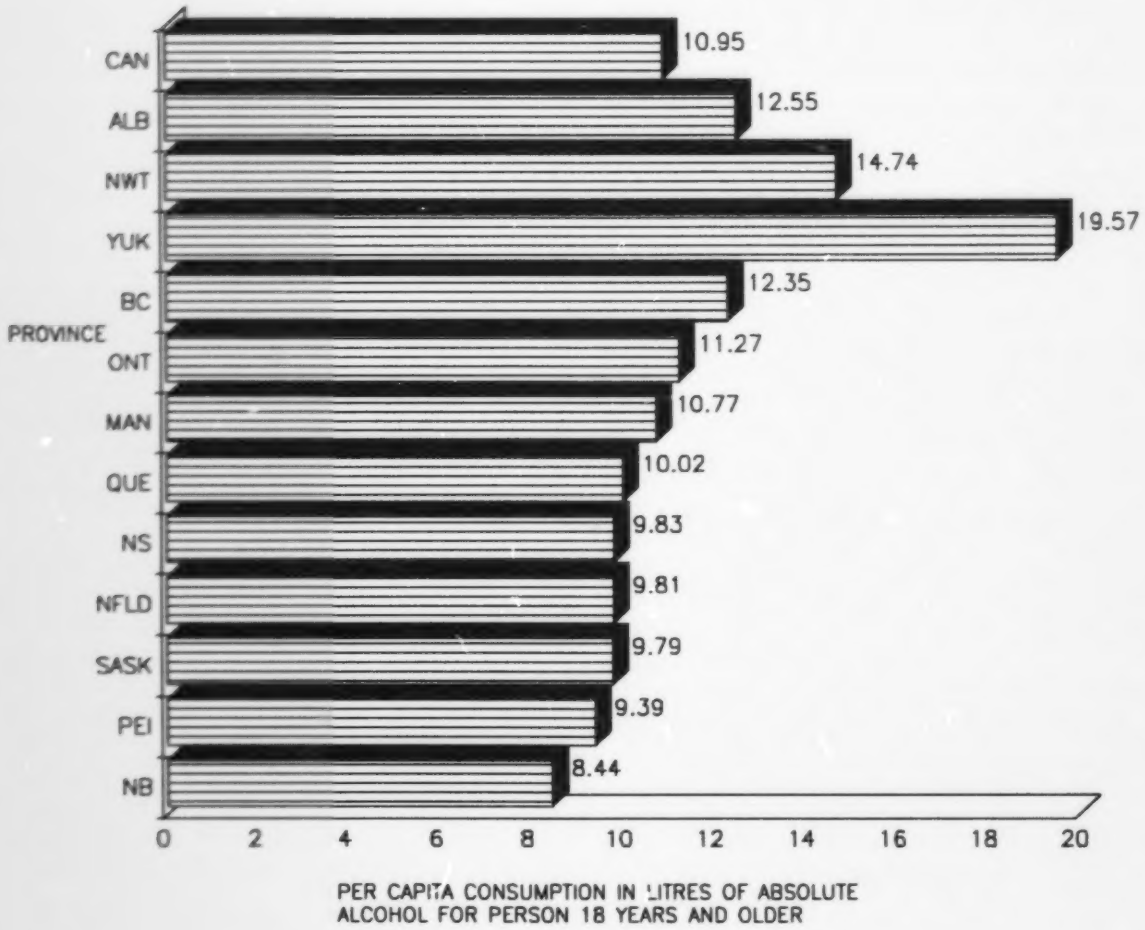
FIGURE 2
QUANTITY OF ALCOHOL CONSUMED IN ALBERTA
1981 – 1987



C. Alcohol Consumption - Alberta vs. Canada

Although the consumption of alcohol has been decreasing in the province since at least 1981, it should be recognized that the latest comparable data indicates that Alberta's consumption of alcohol is still significantly higher than the national rate. Alberta has the highest consumption rate of the provinces and the third highest ratio in Canada after the Yukon and Northwest Territories (see Figure 3).

FIGURE 3
PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION FOR THE POPULATION 18 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER IN LITRES OF ABSOLUTE ALCOHOL, FOR CANADA, THE PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES – 1985



Similarly, a 1984 survey of 48 countries ranked Alberta 18th highest overall in terms of total per capita consumption of alcohol.

D. Summary

Albertans spend an increasing amount of money each year ($942 million in 1987) on alcohol products. However, possibly due to the rising costs of alcoholic beverages as well as lifestyle changes, the consumption of alcohol in Alberta is declining.

Alcohol consumption in Alberta remains above the national rate with Alberta having the highest level of absolute alcohol consumption per capita of the 18 year old and over population of all the provinces and the third highest ratio in Canada after the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

V TRAFFIC COLLISIONS, INJURIES AND FATALITIES

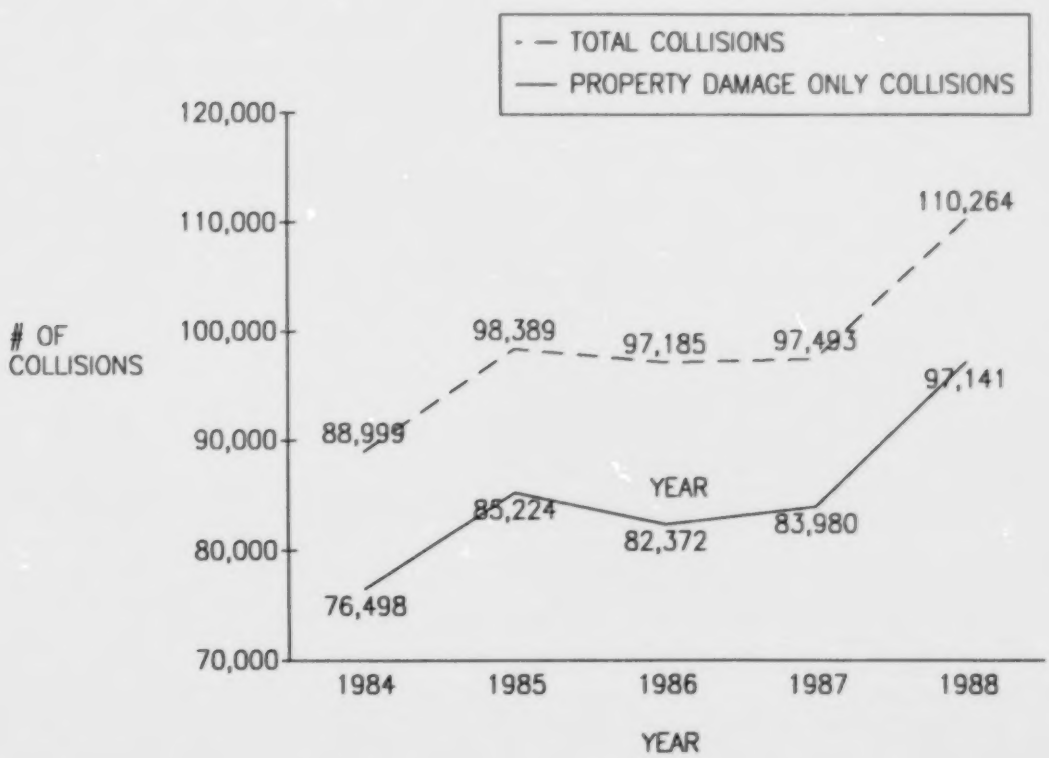
The traffic collision, injury and fatality data in this section was provided by the Alberta Department of Transportation and Utilities and covers the five year period 1984 to 1988. Legislation in Alberta requires that a traffic collision, which results in either death, injury or property damage to an apparent extent of $500.00 or more, be immediately reported to an authorized peace officer. The following figures are based on such reported collisions.

In this report "fatal collision" means a collision from which the death of a person resulted within 30 days of that collision. A "non-fatal injury collision" is a collision in which a personal injury occurred. A "property damage only collision" is a vehicle collision which resulted in property damage only, to the extent of $500.00 or more.

A. Traffic Collisions in Alberta (1984 - 1988)

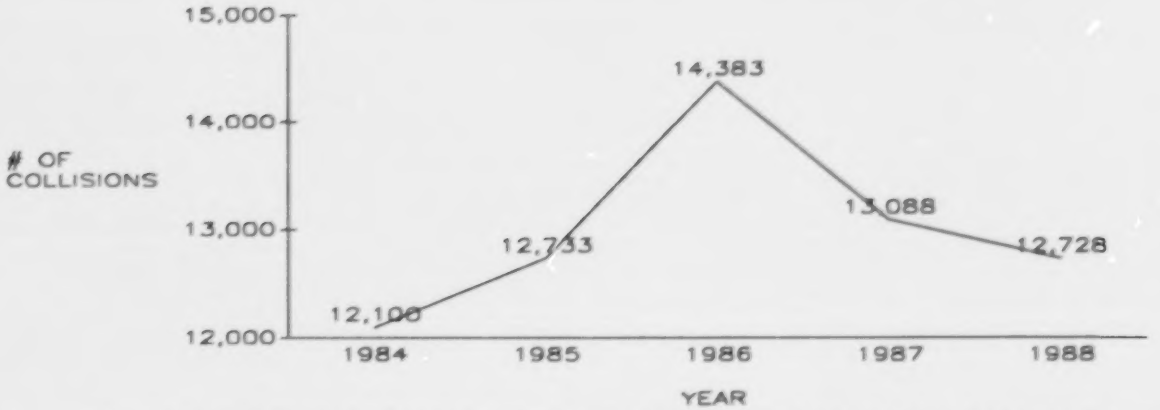
During the five year period from 1984 to 1988, a 23.9% increase in total reportable traffic collisions occurred from 88,999 in 1984 to 110,264 in 1988. This increase, however, was predominantly accounted for by a 27% increase in property damage only collisions from 76,498 in 1984 to 97,141 in 1988 (see Figure 4a).

FIGURE 4a
TRAFFIC COLLISIONS IN ALBERTA – 1984 TO 1988



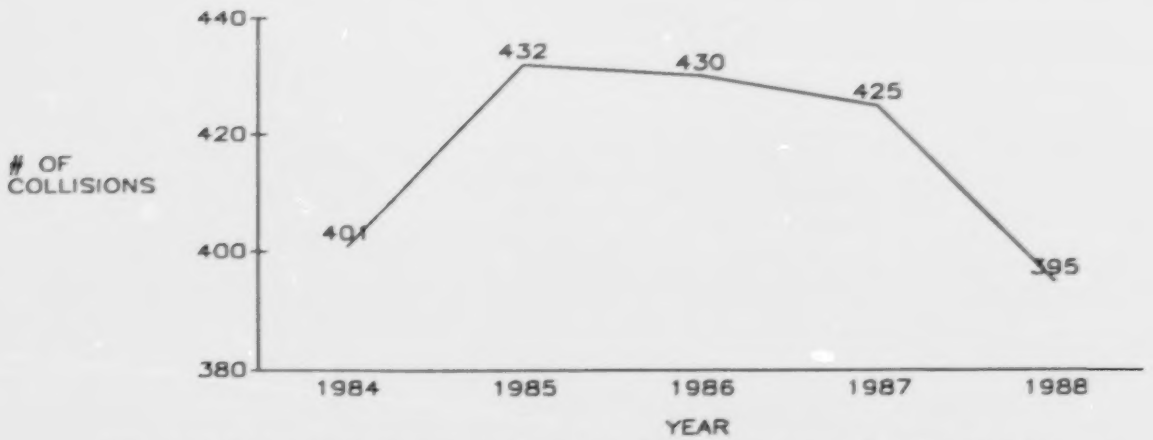
Non-fatal injury collisions have shown a 5.2% increase from 12,100 in 1984 to 12,728 in 1988. However, these collisions increased considerably (18.9%) from 1984 to 1986 with the five year high occurring in 1986 with 14,383 such collisions. Since 1986 non-fatal injury collisions have steadily declined (see Figure 4b).

FIGURE 4b
NON-FATAL INJURY COLLISIONS



For fatal collisions, during the five year period from 1984 to 1988, 1988 represents the lowest year of that period with 395 fatal collisions. The 1988 figure represents a 1.5% decrease from the 1984 figure of 401 fatal collisions. This decrease hides the fact that fatal collisions were considerably higher for the years 1985, 1986 and 1987. Fatal collisions have been decreasing since the five year high of 432 in 1985 (see Figure 4c).

FIGURE 4c
FATAL COLLISIONS



Of the 110,264 reported traffic collisions in Alberta during 1988, 395 (0.4%) were fatal collisions, 12,728 (11.5%) were non-fatal injury collisions and 97,141 (88.1%) were property damage collisions. This compares with the five year period (1984-1988) where there were on average 98,466 total collisions per year of which 417 (0.4%) were fatal collisions, 13,000 (13.2%) were non-fatal injury collisions and 85,043 (86.4%) were property damage only collisions.

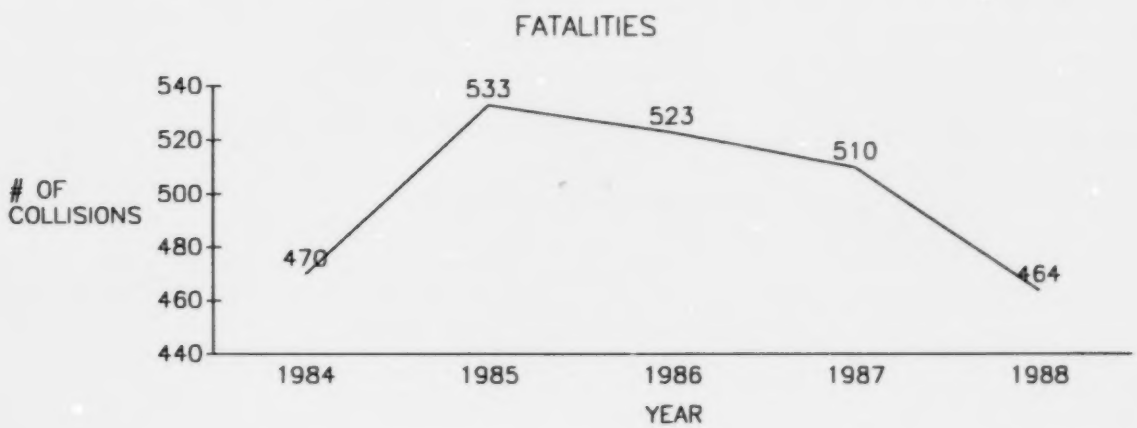
B. Fatalities And Injuries From Traffic Collisions In Alberta (1984 - 1988)

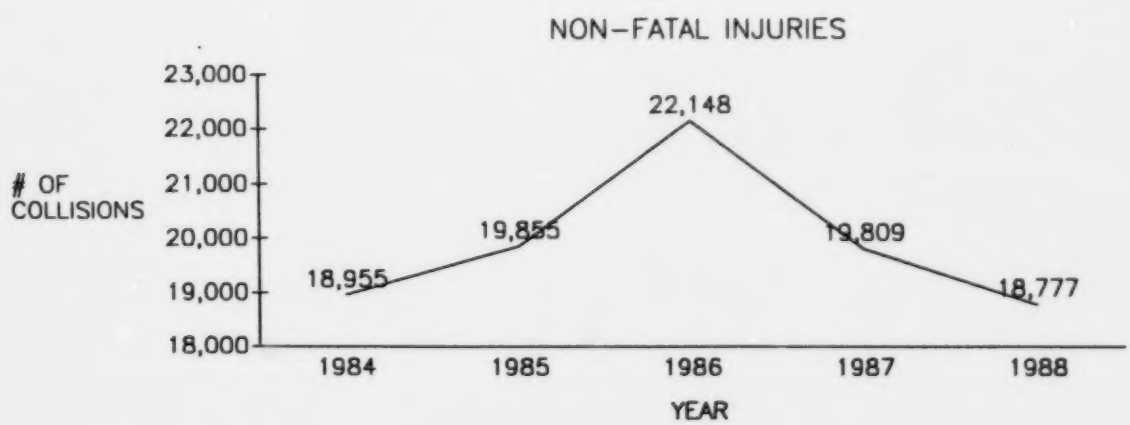
In the five year period from 1984 to 1988, a total of 2,500 people died in Alberta as a result of traffic collisions and a further 99,544 persons were injured (see Figure 5).

The highest annual number of fatalities during the five year study period occurred in 1985 when 533 persons were killed. Since 1985, fatalities have steadily decreased. Overall, fatalities have decreased by 1.3% from 470 in 1984 to 464 in 1988 with an average annual number of fatalities of 500.

The number of persons injured in traffic collisions during the five years steadily increased from 18,955 in 1984 to 22,148 in 1986. From the high point in 1986, the number of injured persons has declined to 18,777 in 1988 - the lowest annual number for the five year period. The 1988 figure of 18,777 represents a 0.9% decrease from the 1984 figure of 18,955. On average, during the five year period, 19,909 persons per year were injured in traffic collisions.

FIGURE 5
FATALITIES AND INJURIES FROM TRAFFIC COLLISIONS IN ALBERTA – 1984 TO 1988





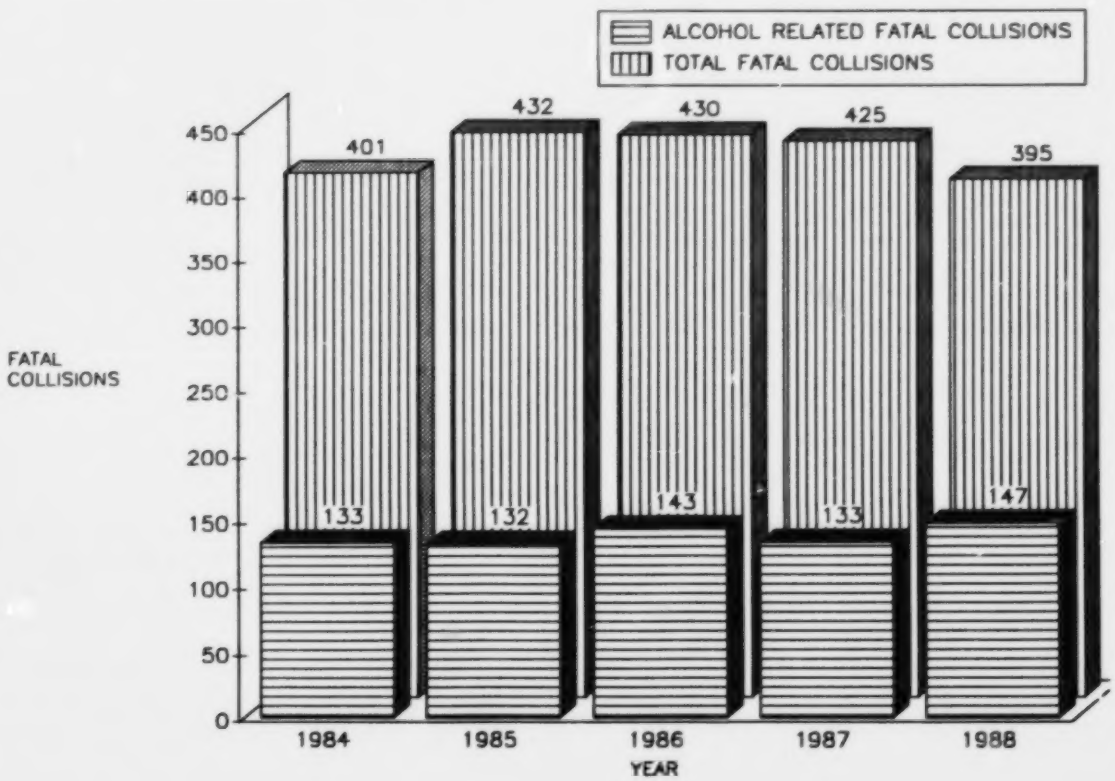
C. Alcohol Related Fatal Collisions in Alberta (1984 - 1988)

"Alcohol related collision" means that the attending police officer reported the presence of alcohol in one or more of the drivers involved in the collision. However, the indication of alcohol involvement on the police collision form does not indicate that alcohol consumption was the cause or contributed to the collision. The figures are considered low as driver condition was often unspecified (e.g. not specified for for 105 drivers in fatal collisions and 1,998 drivers in non-fatal injury collisions in 1988).

During the five year period 1984 to 1988, a yearly average of 30.3% (138) of fatal collisions were reported as alcohol related. A 10.5% increase in the number of reported alcohol related collisions was noted from 133 in 1984 to 147 in 1988 . The highest number of such collisions (147) occurred in 1988 - this represents 37.2% of the total number of 395 fatal collisions for that year (see Figure 6).

Data shows that Saturday followed by Friday are the highest risk days of the week for alcohol related fatal collisions. Most alcohol related fatal collisions (29% in 1988) occurred between 11:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m. In 1988, the months of April and July were the two highest risk months.

FIGURE 6
ALCOHOL RELATED FATAL COLLISIONS IN ALBERTA
1984 TO 1988

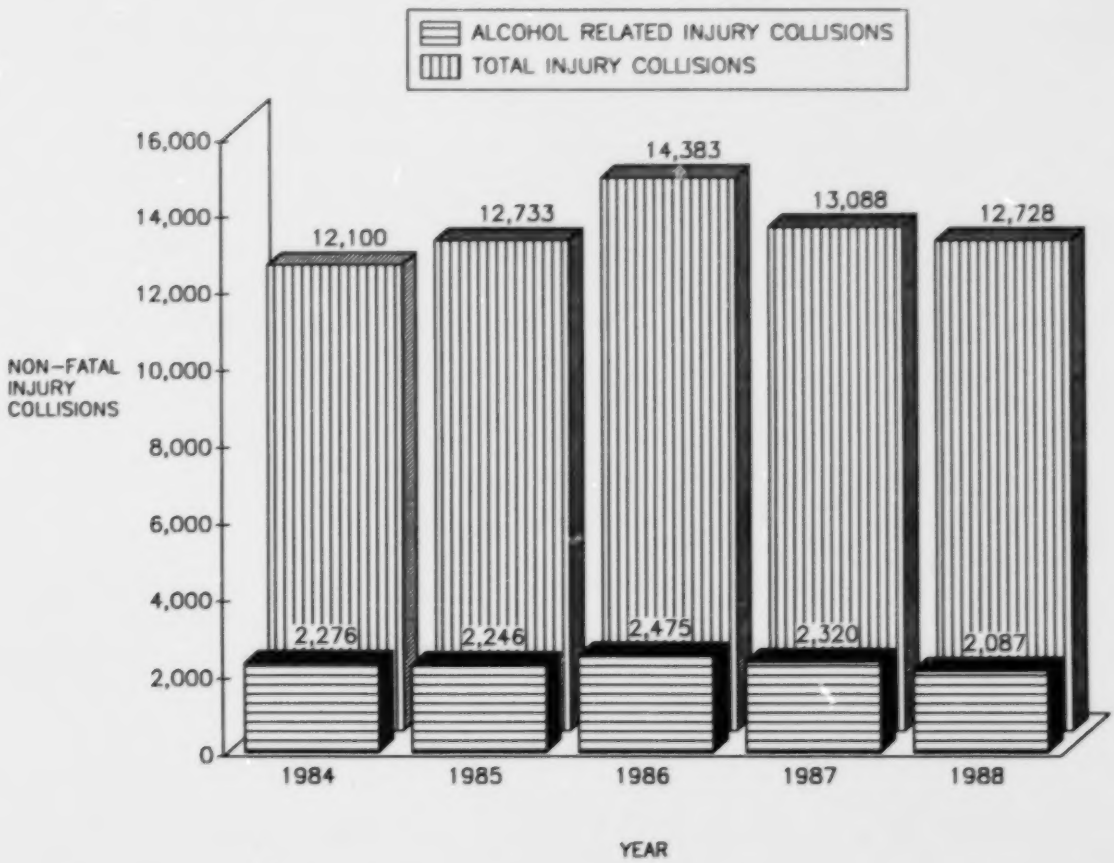


D. Alcohol Related Injury Collisions in Alberta (1984 - 1988)

On average, during the five year period 1984 to 1988, 17.5% of non-fatal injury collisions were alcohol related. Alcohol related injury collisions declined by 8.3% during the period from 2,276 in 1984 to 2,087 in 1988 (see Figure 7). Alcohol related injury collisions were at the highest level during the five year period in 1986 with 2,475 reported collisions and at the lowest level in 1988 with 2,087 such collisions.

Similar to alcohol related fatal collisions, alcohol related injury collisions are most likely to occur on a Saturday. Unlike alcohol related fatal collisions, however, Sunday is the second highest risk day for alcohol related injury collisions. The most dangerous time for driving for such collisions is between 11:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m. followed by the period between 7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. These collisions, on average, most frequently occur during the period between May and September.

FIGURE 7
ALCOHOL RELATED NON-FATAL INJURY COLLISIONS IN ALBERTA
1984 TO 1988



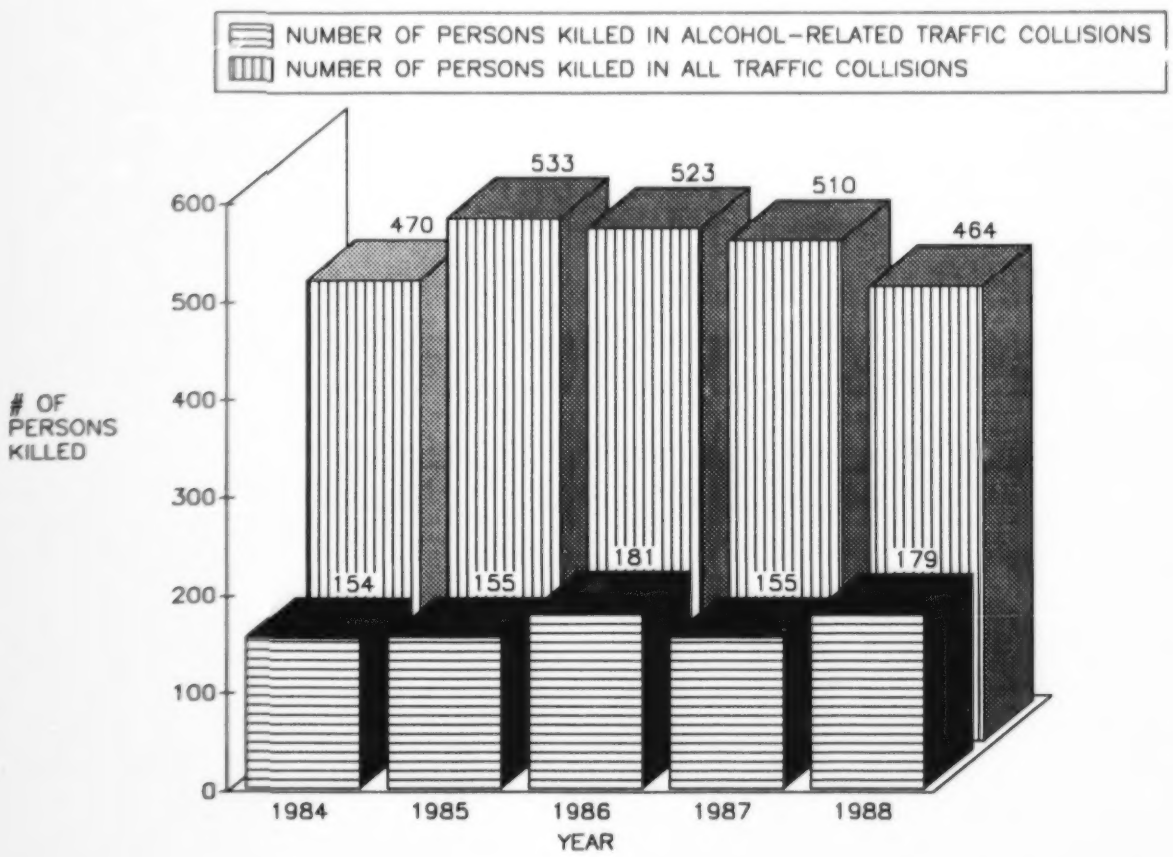
E. The Number of Persons Killed in Alcohol Related Collisions in Alberta (1984 - 1988)

The deaths and injuries associated with alcohol related collisions must be interpreted with caution. Based on the data collection process (police reporting forms), the presence of alcohol does not indicate that alcohol consumption was the cause of, or even a contributing factor to, the collision.

During the five year period 1984 to 1988, a total of 824 persons were killed in Alberta in alcohol related collisions - this equates on average to 165 fatalities per year for the period. The 824 alcohol related fatalities also represented 33% of the 2,500 fatalities for the period (see Figure 8).

The number of alcohol related fatalities increased by 16.2% from 154 in 1984 to 179 in 1988. The 179 fatalities in 1988 represented the second highest year for alcohol related fatalities for the period - 1986 being the highest with 181 fatalities. 1988 also recorded the highest proportion of total fatalities that were alcohol related for any year at 38.6%.

FIGURE 8
THE NUMBER OF PERSONS KILLED IN ALCOHOL RELATED COLLISIONS IN ALBERTA – 1984 TO 1988

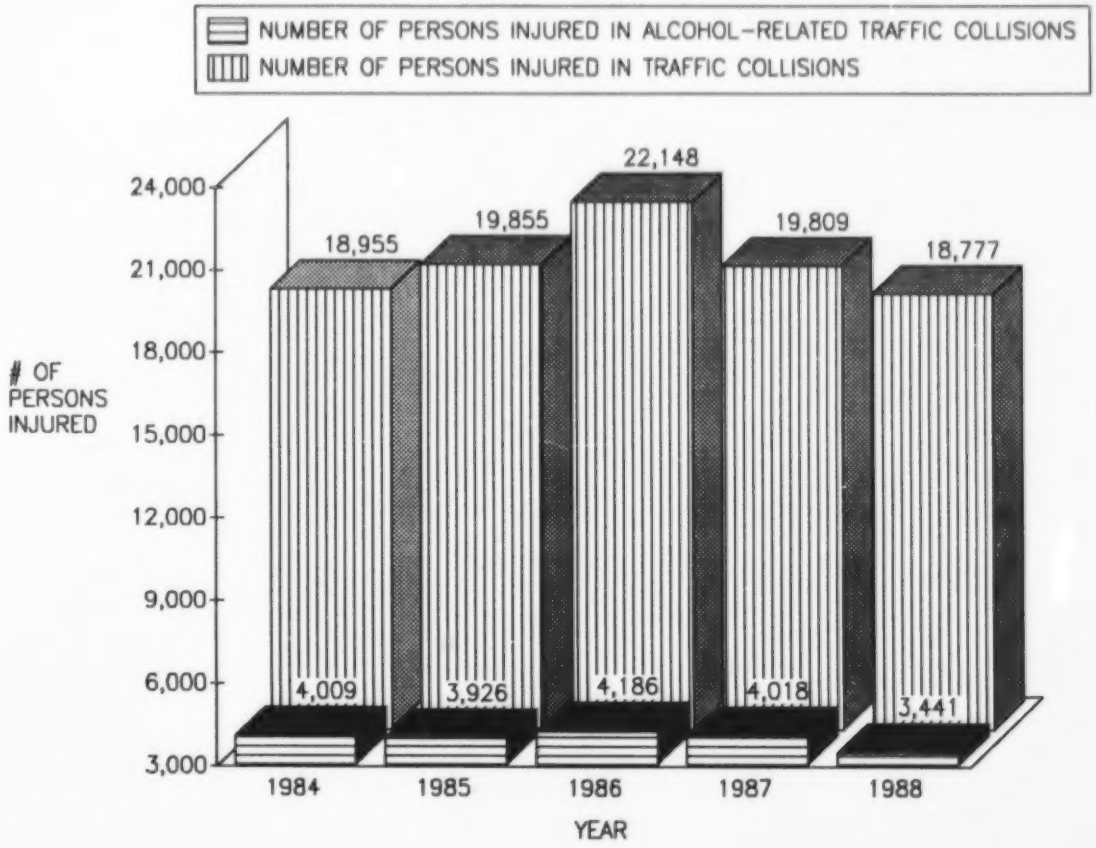


F. The Number of Persons Injured From Alcohol Related Collisions In Alberta (1984 - 1988)

During the five year period 1984 to 1988, a total of 19,580 persons were injured in alcohol related accidents - this represents 19.7% of the 99,544 persons injured in all traffic accidents. On average, during the period, 3,916 persons per year were injured in alcohol related collisions (see Figure 9).

Contrary to the data on fatalities, the proportion of persons injured in alcohol related accidents was lowest in 1988 at 18.3%. The number of alcohol related injuries has decreased by 14.2% from 4,009 in 1984 to 3,441 in 1988 and by 17.8% from the high of 4,186 in 1986.

FIGURE 9
THE NUMBER OF PERSONS INJURED IN ALCOHOL-RELATED COLLISIONS IN ALBERTA - 1984 TO 1988

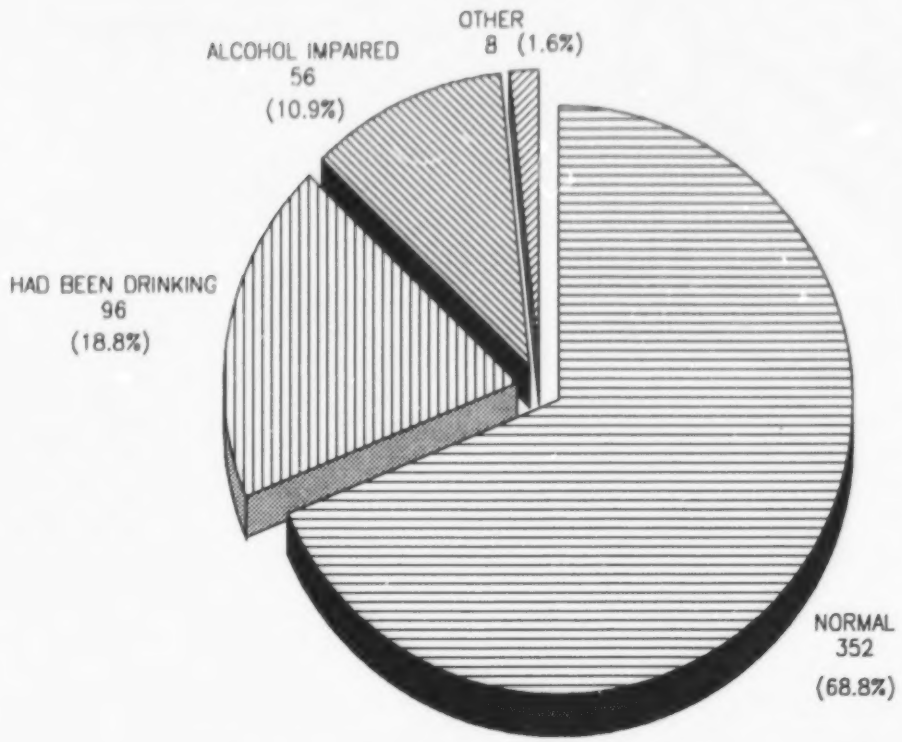


G. Condition Of Drivers In Fatality And Injury Collisions In Alberta (1984 - 1988)

In Alberta during 1988, a total of 617 drivers were involved in 395 fatal collisions and 21,137 drivers were involved in 12,728 non-fatal injury collisions. The condition of the majority (93%) of these drivers respecting whether they had been using alcohol or not was recorded by the police officer attending the collision.

Of the 512 drivers involved in fatal collisions where driver condition was reported, 352 (68.8%) were normal, 96 (18.8%) had been drinking and 56 (10.9%) were alcohol impaired (see Figure 10). In 1988, a total of 152 (29.7%) of those drivers involved in fatal collisions whose condition was reported had been involved with alcohol.

FIGURE 10
CONDITION OF DRIVERS IN FATAL COLLISIONS IN ALBERTA
1988

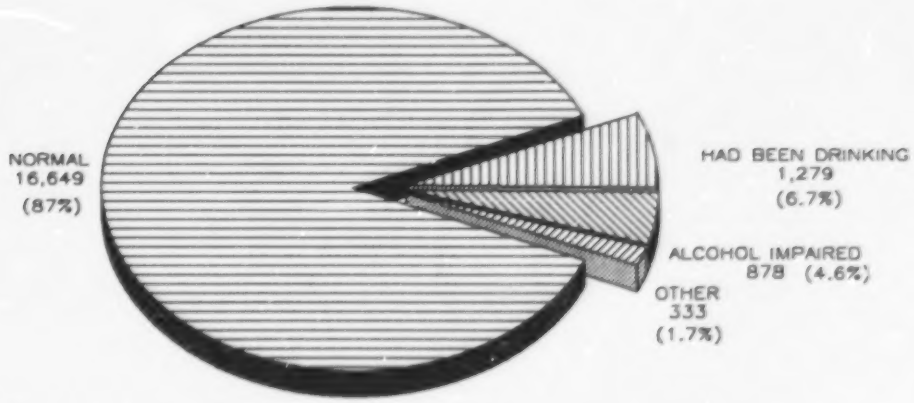


TOTAL DRIVERS WITH DRIVING CONDITION REPORTED = 512

TOTAL DRIVERS INVOLVED IN FATAL ACCIDENTS = 617

Of the 19,139 drivers involved in non-fatal injury collisions where driver condition was reported, 16,649 (87%) were normal; 1,279 (6.7%) had been drinking and 878 (4.6%) were alcohol impaired (see Figure 11). In 1988, a total of 2,157 (11.3%) of those drivers in non-fatal injury collisions, whose condition was reported had been involved with alcohol.

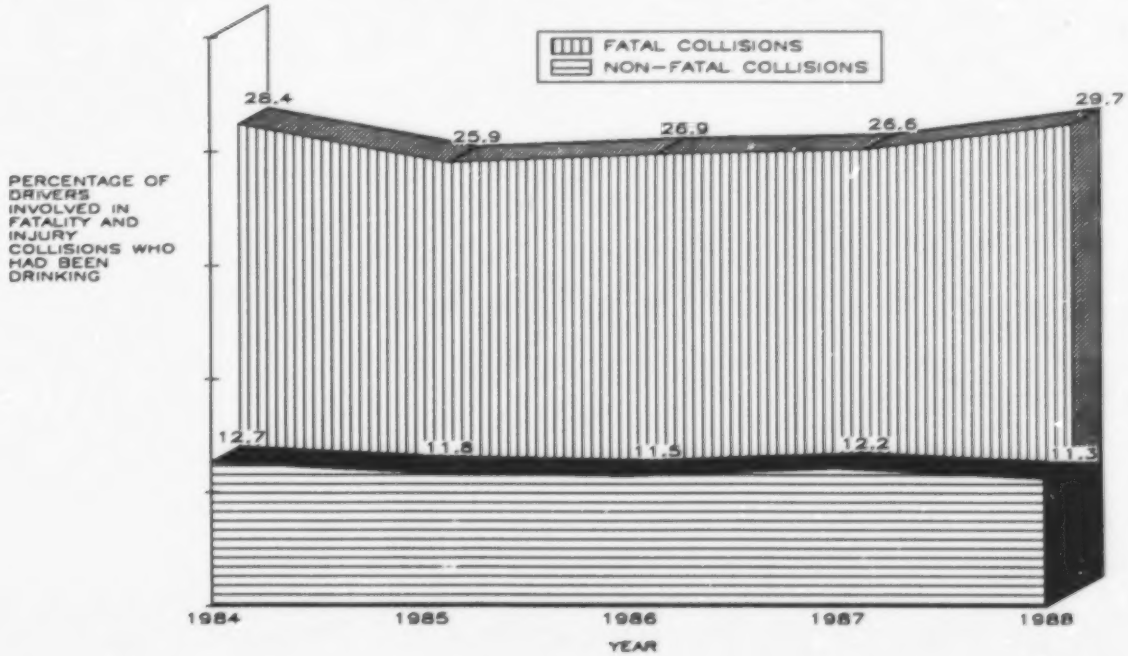
FIGURE 11
CONDITION OF DRIVERS IN NON-FATAL INJURY COLLISIONS
IN ALBERTA - 1988



TOTAL DRIVERS WITH DRIVING CONDITION REPORTED = 19,139
TOTAL DRIVERS INVOLVED IN NON-FATAL INJURY COLLISIONS = 21,137

The 1988 picture of drivers who had been drinking and involved in a fatal or injury collision was typical of the five year period from 1984 to 1988 (see Figure 12). On average, 27.5% of those drivers involved in fatal collisions, whose condition was reported, had been involved with alcohol and 11.9% of those drivers involved in injury collisions had been involved with alcohol. Of those total drivers involved in fatality and injury collisions who had been drinking, over one third were judged by the police to have been alcohol impaired.

FIGURE 12
INVOLVEMENT OF DRINKING DRIVERS IN FATALITY AND INJURY
COLLISIONS IN ALBERTA - 1984 TO 1988

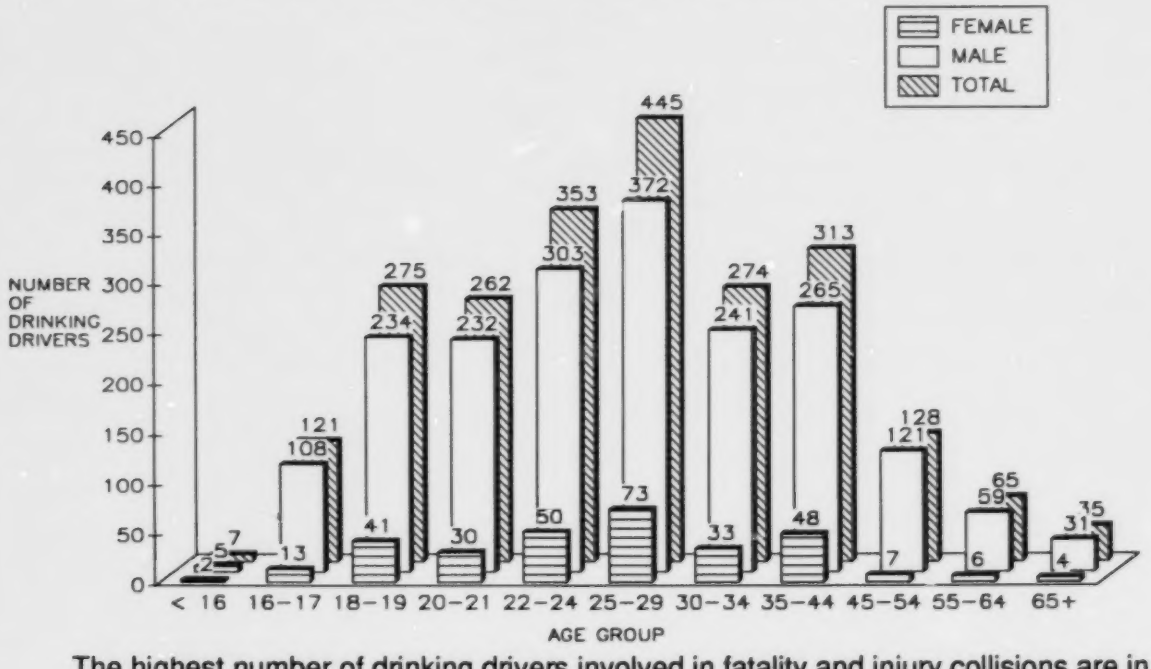


H. Age And Sex Of Drinking Drivers Involved In Fatal And Injury Collisions In Alberta (1988)

Of the 2,309 drinking drivers involved in fatal or injury collisions (see Figures 10 and 11) for whom age and sex information was recorded, 86.5% were male. The category with the highest number of drinking drivers was the 25-29 age group, accounting for nearly 20% of all drinking drivers - this category was highest for both male and female drivers (see Figure 13). Similarly, the second highest age category for males and females was the 22-24 age group. These two age groups accounted for 35% of the drinking drivers in fatality and injury collisions.

The 20-29 age group, males and females, accounted for 46.5% of the drinking drivers involved in fatality and injury collisions with the male 20-29 age group alone accounting for almost 40% of such drivers.

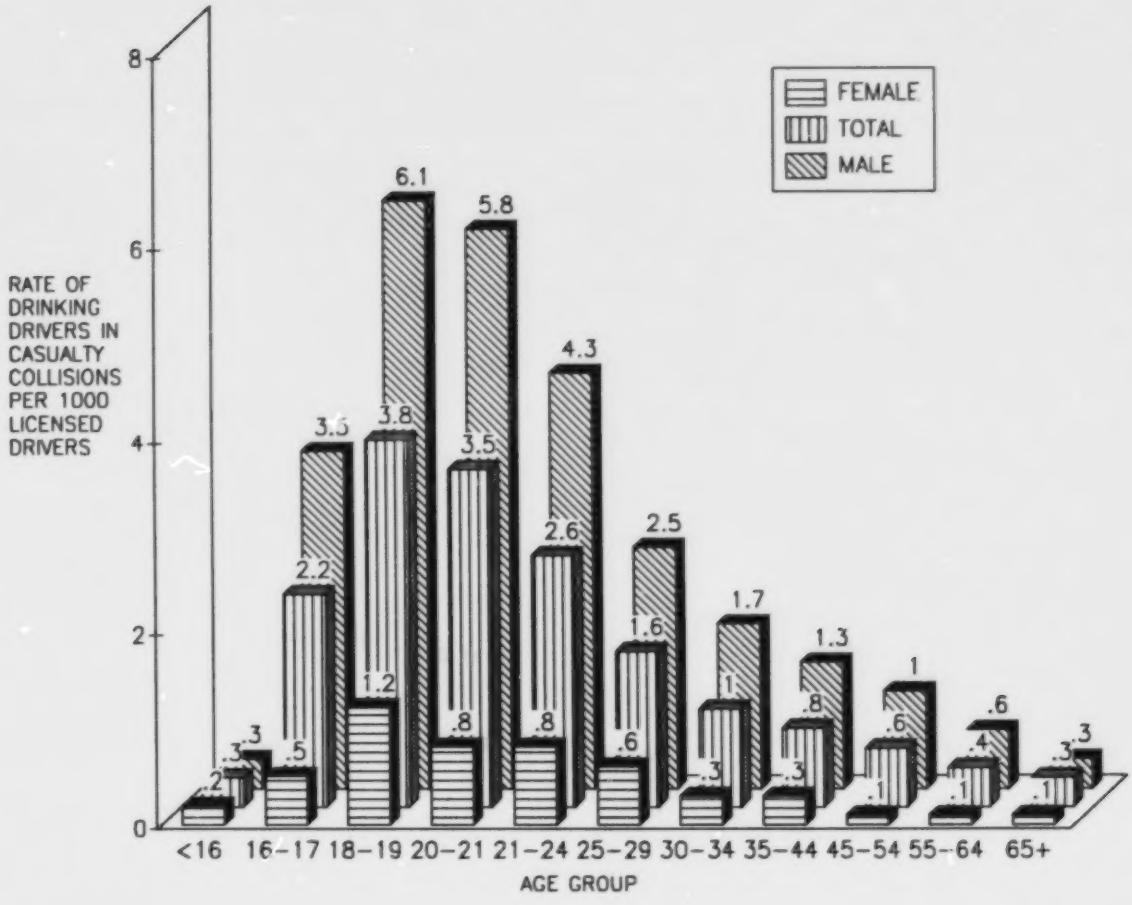
FIGURE 13
NUMBER OF DRINKING DRIVERS INVOLVED IN FATAL AND INJURY COLLISIONS IN ALBERTA IN 1988 BY AGE AND SEX



The highest number of drinking drivers involved in fatality and injury collisions are in the 25-29 age category. When the number of licenced drivers is controlled for, a different picture of drinking drivers begins to emerge. The 18-19 age category has the highest rate (3.8) of drinking drivers involved in fatality and injury collisions per 1000 licenced drivers of all age groups. More particularly, males in this age group have a rate of 6.1 compared with a rate for females of 1.2. The second highest category is the 20-21 age group with a total rate of 3.5 drinking drivers involved in fatality and injury collisions per 1000 licenced drivers (see Figure 14).

In terms of representation it is quite clear that the males in the age range 16-24 years are significantly over represented as drinking drivers involved in fatality and injury collisions compared to drivers in other age categories.

FIGURE 14
THE RATE OF DRINKING DRIVERS INVOLVED IN FATAL AND INJURY COLLISIONS PER 1000 LICENCED DRIVERS IN ALBERTA IN 1988 BY AGE AND SEX



I. Summary

A large number of serious traffic collisions occur in Alberta every year. In 1988, a total of 110,264 traffic collisions were reported, including 395 fatal collisions and 12,728 non-fatal injury collisions. As a result of such collisions, 464 persons were killed and 18,777 persons were injured. Fatal and non-fatal injury collisions have kept relatively stable during the period 1984 - 1988. In 1988, over 37% of fatal collisions were alcohol related and over 16% of injury collisions were alcohol related. In total, alcohol related collisions resulted in 179 people being killed and 3,441 persons being injured. Reported data indicates that nearly 30% of drivers in fatal collisions and over 11% of drivers in injury collisions had been involved with alcohol. Over 85% of drinking drivers involved in fatality and injury collisions are male. Males and females in their 20's account for nearly 35% of drinking drivers involved in fatal or injury collisions. The male 16-24 age group is significantly over represented in the alcohol related collision problem.

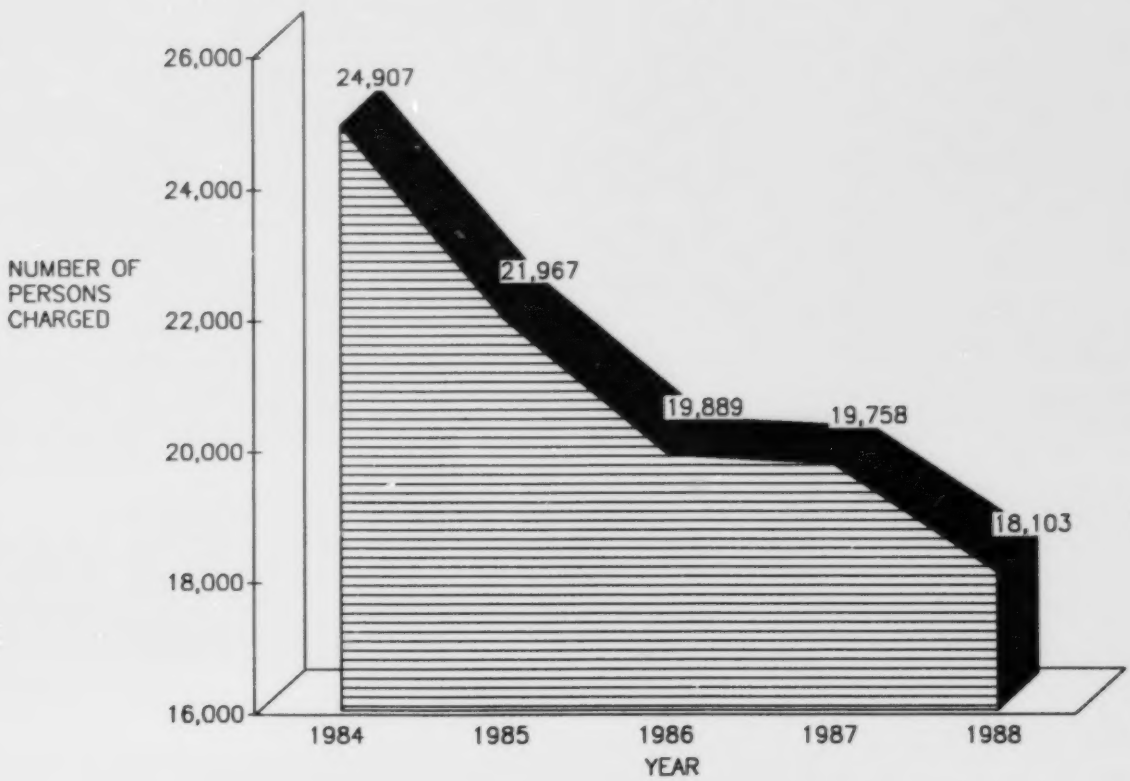
VI PERSONS CHARGED WITH IMPAIRED DRIVING

A. Persons Charged With Impaired Driving Offences In Alberta (1984 - 1988)

The data reported in this subsection is provided by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, in a report entitled the Daily Bulletin published in July, 1989. Of the 18,103 persons charged in Alberta in 1988 with impaired driving offences, 30 (0.2%) were charged with Impaired Operation of a Motor Vehicle, Vessel or Aircraft Causing Death; 169 (0.9%) were charged with Impaired Operation of a Motor Vehicle, Vessel or Aircraft Causing Bodily Harm; 475 (2.6%) were charged with Failure or Refusal to Provide a Breath or Blood Sample and 17,429 (96.3%) were charged with Impaired Operation of a Motor Vehicle, Vessel or Aircraft and Driving with Over 80 mg of Alcohol in 100 Millilitres of Blood.

During the period 1984 to 1988, the number of persons charged with impaired driving in Alberta dropped by 27.3% from 24,907 in 1984 to 18,103 in 1988 (see Figure 15). This reduction is the second highest in Canada for that period and is only exceeded by Prince Edward Island. The five year trend shows a consistent annual decline in the number of persons charged.

FIGURE 15
PERSONS CHARGED WITH IMPAIRED DRIVING IN ALBERTA – (1984 TO 1988)



In Canada, for the period 1984 to 1988, a 14.6% reduction in the number of persons charged with impaired driving has been reported (see Table 1). This national reduction is noticeably less than the 27.3% noted in Alberta. In 1988, Alberta had the third highest number of persons charged with impaired driving offences after Ontario and Quebec. However, when the population of the various provinces and territories are controlled for, Alberta had the highest rate of persons charged for impaired driving of all the provinces.

Table 1

Persons Charged With Impaired Driving Offences In Canada (1988)

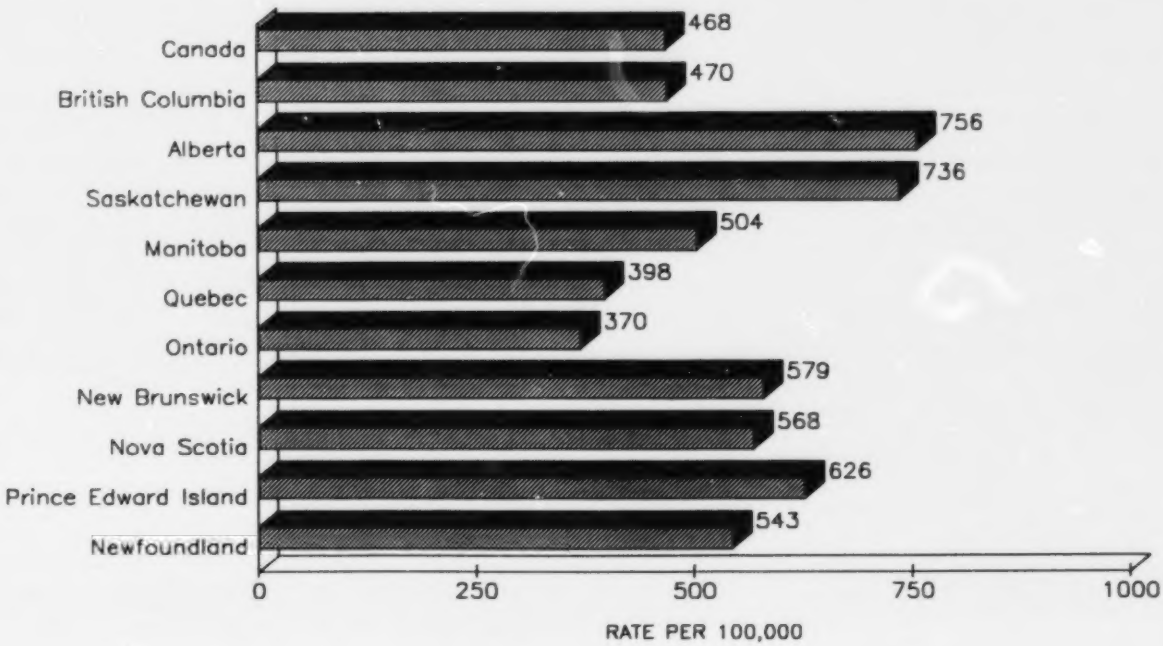
Province	Number of persons charged in 1988	% change 1984-88	Population (000's)	Rate per 100,000 Population
Newfoundland	3,083	+6.8%	568.0	543
Prince Edward Island	806	-38.1%	128.8	626
Nova Scotia	5,015	-10.6%	882.8	568
New Brunswick	4,133	-10.3%	714.3	579
Quebec	24,543	+13.9%	6,638.3	370
Ontario	37,475	-18.6%	9,426.1	398
Manitoba	5,464	-12.0%	1,084.0	504
Saskatchewan	7,457	-22.6%	1,012.8	736
Alberta	18,103	-27.3%	2,395.2	756
British Columbia	14,013	-23.0%	2,983.8	470
Yukon	621	+13.9%	25.3	2,455
Northwest Territories	595	- 3.9%	52.3	1,138
Canada	121,308	-14.6%	25,911.8	468

In 1988, Alberta had 756 persons charged with impaired driving for every 100,000 people in the province. This compares with a national rate of 468. Alberta's rate of persons charged with impaired driving offences is 61.5% above the national rate (see Figure 16). The territories have rates much higher than both Alberta and the national rate. However, the population figures for the territories are relatively small and have therefore been excluded from this comparison. Alberta has recorded the highest provincial rate for five consecutive years.

It is evident that Alberta has experienced a considerable drop in the number of persons charged for impaired driving offences during the last five years. However, the rate of charging is still significantly higher than the national rate.

The number of persons charged for impaired driving is influenced by several factors, two of the most important being the actual prevalence of impaired driving in the province and the detection activities of the police forces in the province.

FIGURE 16
PERSONS CHARGED WITH IMPAIRED DRIVING, RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION
CANADA AND THE PROVINCES, 1988



B. Police Impaired Driving Detection Activities in Alberta (1984 - 1988)

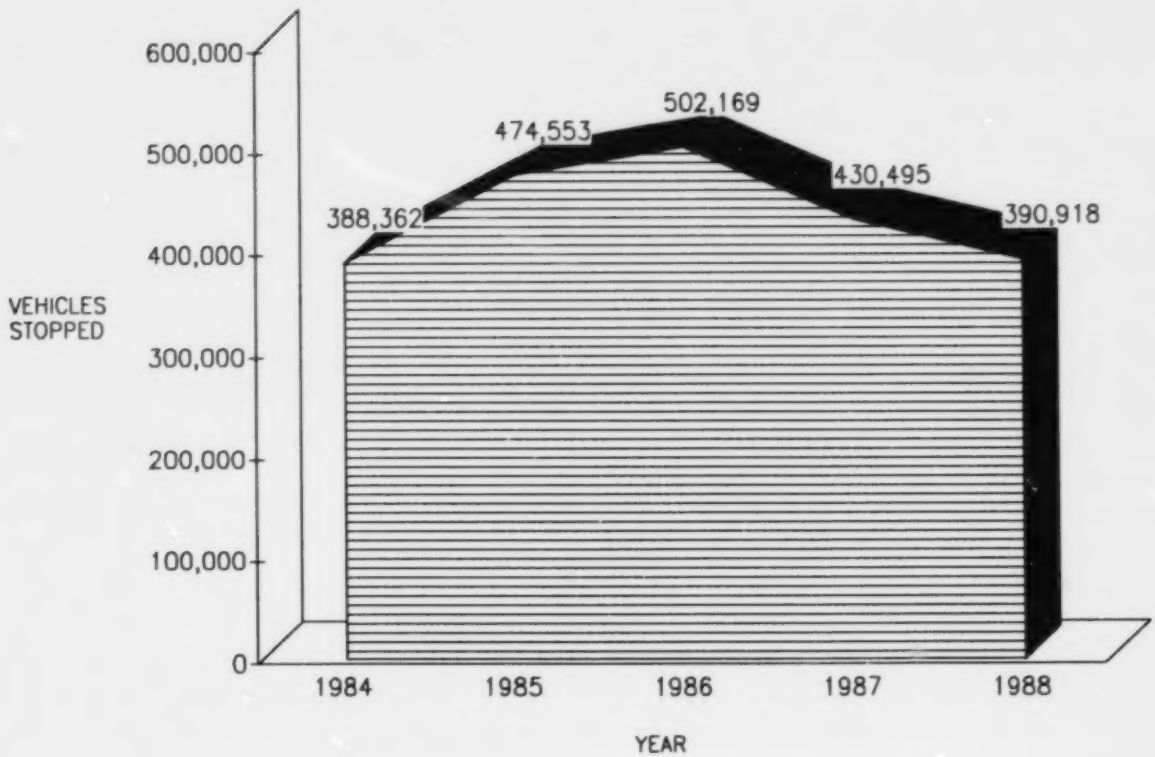
The data in this subsection of the report is provided by the Department of the Solicitor General.

On average, during the 1984-88 period, a total of 437,000 cars were checked each year for impaired drivers at police Checkstop locations.

During the period from April 1, 1988 - March 31, 1989, police forces in Alberta stopped and checked over 390,000 vehicles in the Checkstop program (see Figure 17). The Checkstop program, which has been in operation since 1973, is a combined enforcement and education program designed to deter persons from drinking and driving and remove impaired drivers from Alberta's roadways. As a result of such Checkstop activity, 1,688 twenty-four hour road-side suspensions were issued and 2,938 impaired driving charges were laid in 1988.

Routine enforcement activity, which is not directly related to the Checkstop program, yields the greatest number of impaired driving charges each year.

FIGURE 17
TOTAL VEHICLES STOPPED IN ALBERTA CHECKSTOP PROGRAM
1984 – 1988



C. Summary

The number of persons in Alberta charged with impaired driving has declined from 24,907 in 1984 to 18,103 in 1988, a reduction of 27.3%. When controlling for population size, Alberta has the highest number of persons charged per 100,000 of the total population of all the provinces (excluding the territories) and is 61.5% higher than the national rate. During the 1984 - 1988 period, the police forces located throughout the province operated a Checkstop program that, on average, checked over 437,000 vehicles each year.

VII PUNISHMENT FOR IMPAIRED DRIVING

A. Driver Licence Suspensions in Alberta (1984/85 - 1988/89)

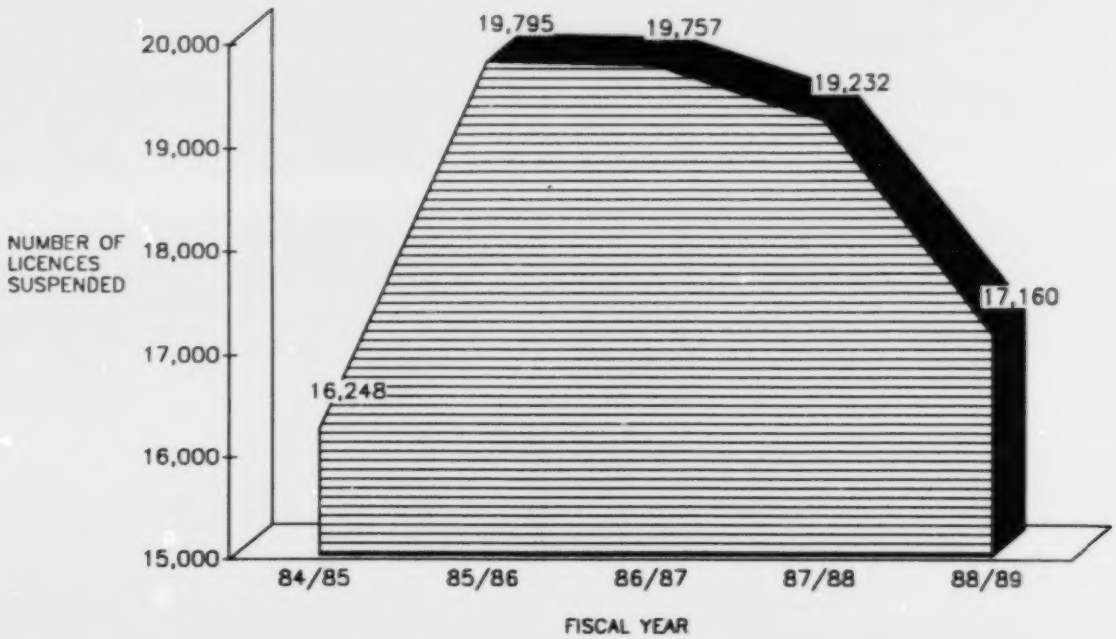
The data provided in this subsection is provided by the Department of the Solicitor General.

As already indicated in this report, the penalty for impaired driving includes a driver licence suspension carried out under the authority of the provincial Motor Vehicle Administration Act. In most cases, the provincial licence suspension period tends to be longer than the corresponding driving prohibition period imposed by the judiciary under the Criminal Code of Canada. The mandatory driver licence suspension period in Alberta is one year on first conviction, three years on a second conviction, and five years for third and subsequent convictions.

Driver licence suspension data indicates that since 1985/86, a steady decline has been taking place in the number of licence suspensions for alcohol related driving offences (see Figure 18). Between the fiscal years 1985/86 and 1988/89 a 13.3% decrease in licence suspensions for alcohol related driving offences, has occurred, with the most noticeable decrease between the 1987/88 and 1988/89 fiscal years (10.8%). Data for 1984/85 has not been used in this analysis because of comparability problems relating to the Criminal Code of Canada changes and automated system recording changes.

The downward trend for licence suspensions as a result of alcohol related driving convictions follows, as expected, the downward trend for persons charged with impaired driving offences.

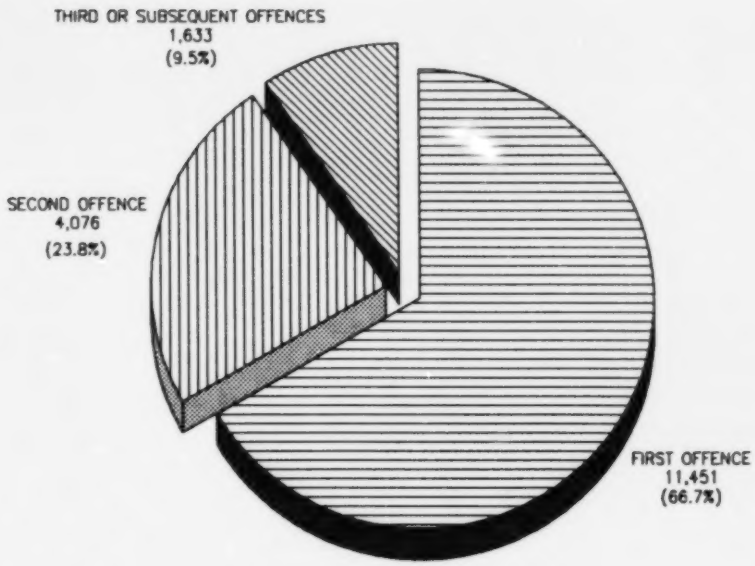
FIGURE 18
IMPAIRED DRIVING LICENCE SUSPENSIONS IN ALBERTA
1984/85 – 1988/89



In Alberta, during the 1988/89 fiscal year, a total of 17,160 driver licences were suspended for impaired driving offences (see Figure 19).

Of these 17,160 licence suspensions, 11,451 (66.7%) were for first offences; 4,076 (23.8%) were for second offences and 1,633 (9.5%) were for third and subsequent offences. This means that one third of drivers whose licences were suspended for impaired driving were repeat offenders. The 1987/88 licence suspension data also strongly supports this picture of impaired driving offenders.

FIGURE 19
DRIVER LICENCE SUSPENSIONS BY NUMBER OF OFFENCES
FOR ALBERTA - 1988



TOTAL SUSPENSIONS = 17,160

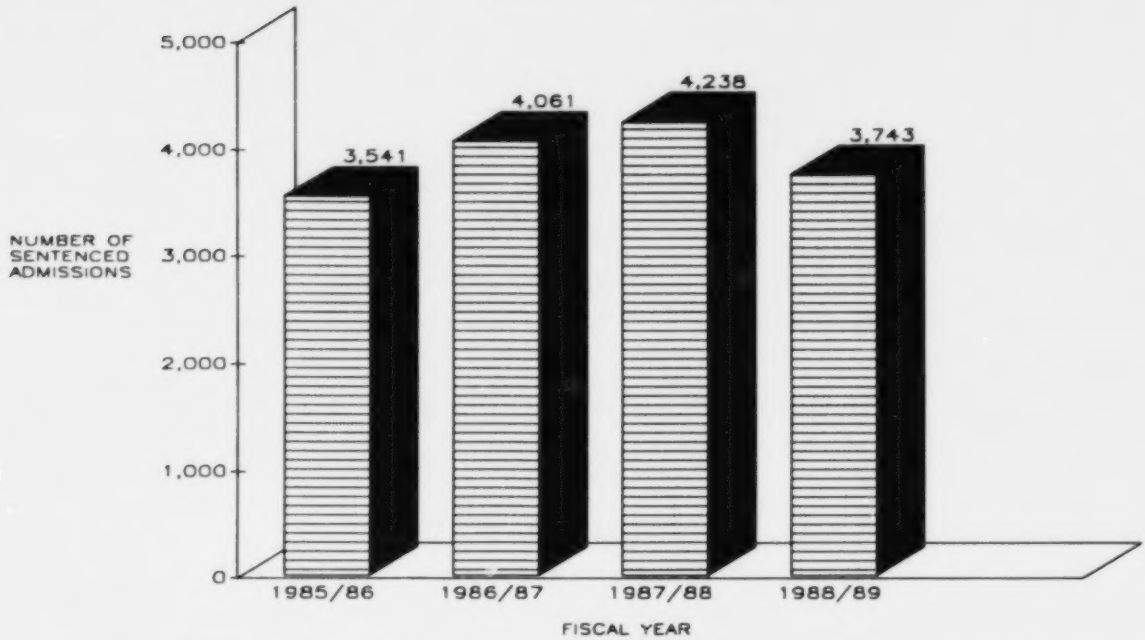
B. Number Of Sentenced Impaired Drivers Admitted To Alberta Correctional Centres (1985/86 - 1988/89)

The data provided in subsection B and C of this section is derived from the Correctional Services Division of the Department of the Solicitor General.

During the four year period from 1985/86 to 1988/89, sentenced admissions to Alberta Correctional Centres increased for impaired driving offences (see Figure 20). This is in direct contrast to the declining trends already outlined with respect to persons charged with impaired driving and the resultant driver licence suspensions.

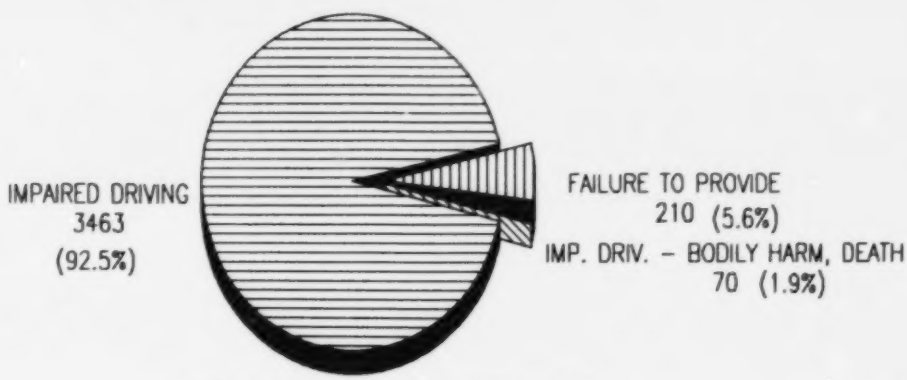
A 5.7% increase in sentenced admissions from 3,541 in 1985/86 to 3,743 in 1988/89 occurred. The 1987/88 fiscal year recorded the highest number of sentenced admissions in the four year period, with 4,238. In total, 15,583 admissions were made to Alberta correctional centres for persons convicted of impaired driving offences, for the four year study period.

FIGURE 20
NUMBER OF IMPAIRED DRIVING OFFENDERS INCARCERATED
IN ALBERTA – 1985/86 TO 1988/89



During the fiscal year 1988/89 a total of 3,743 admissions were made to Alberta adult correctional centres for persons sentenced for impaired driving offences. Of these 3,743 sentenced admissions, 3,463 (92.5%) were for Impaired Driving; 210 (5.6%) for Failure to Provide a Breath or Blood Sample and 70 (1.9%) for Impaired Driving Causing Bodily Harm or Death. (see Figure 21).

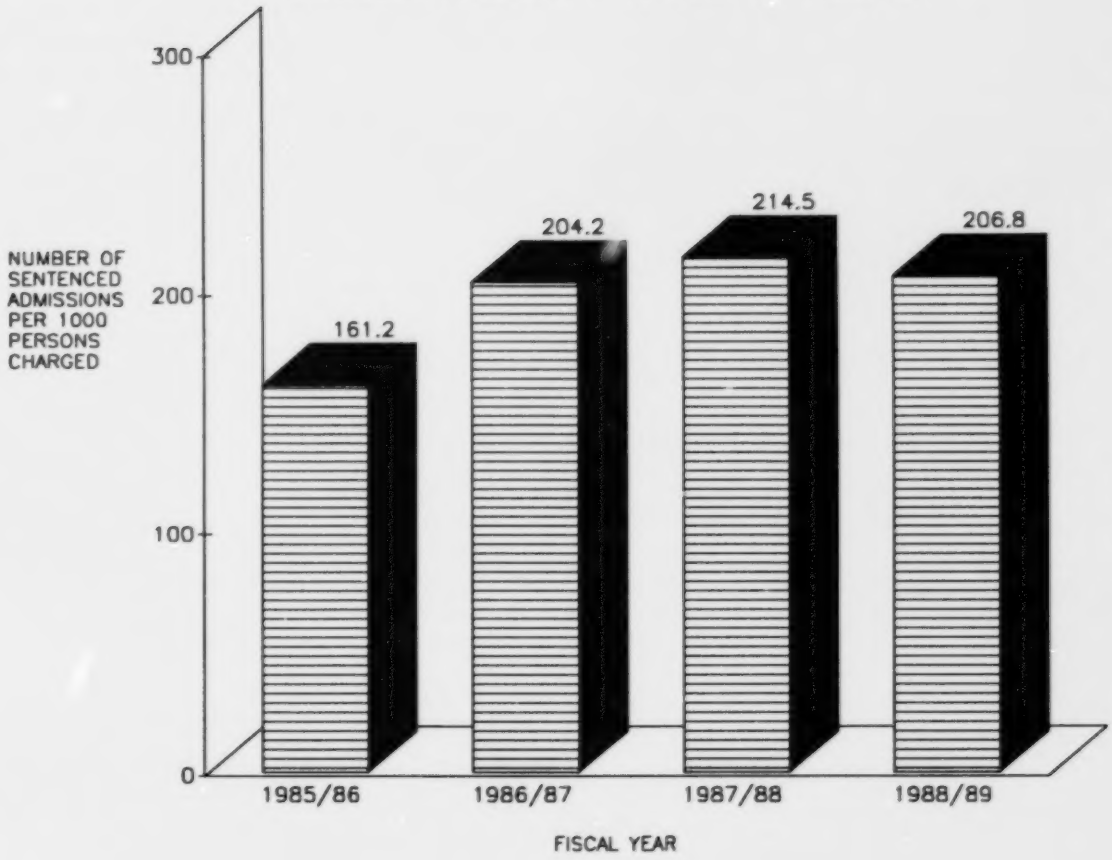
FIGURE 21
IMPAIRED DRIVING SENTENCED ADMISSIONS TO ALBERTA
ADULT CORRECTIONAL CENTRES – 1988/89



TOTAL SENTENCED ADMISSIONS = 3,743

The number of persons admitted to correctional centres is dependent on the number of persons charged and convicted of impaired driving, especially those being convicted of second and subsequent offences or the more serious charges involving injury or death. For comparison purposes, the number of admissions to Alberta's correctional centres has been calculated per 1,000 persons charged (see Figure 22).

FIGURE 22
NUMBER OF SENTENCED ADMISSIONS PER 1000 PERSONS CHARGED IN ALBERTA – 1985/86 TO 1988/89



For every 1000 persons charged in 1988/89 by the police, 206.8 persons are sentenced to a term of imprisonment. This represents a 28.3% increase over the rate of imprisonment for the four year period commencing in 1985/86. The highest sentencing rate of imprisonment was 214.5 per 1,000 charged in the 1987/88 fiscal year, a rate 33.1% higher than in 1985/86.

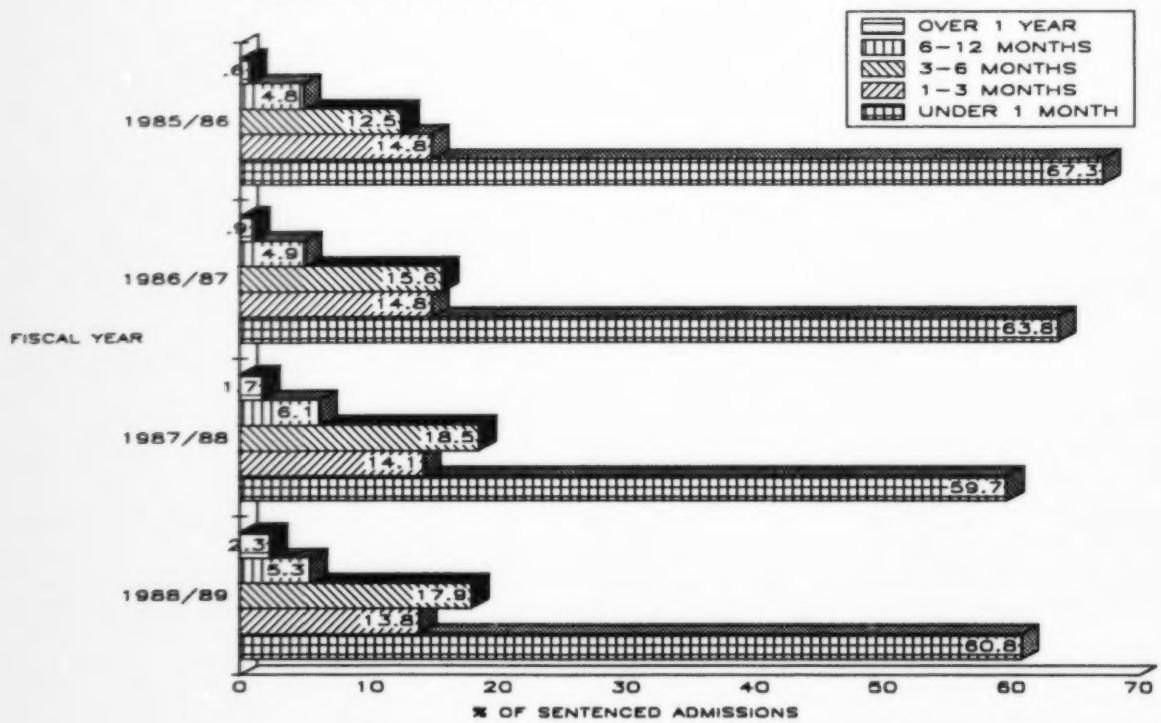
It is evident that, even allowing for the downward trend in 1988/89, significant increases in rates for sentences of imprisonment have occurred since 1985/86. The sentencing pattern for impaired drivers is, however, not only dependent on the number of persons sentenced but also on the length of the sentence received.

C. Length Of Custodial Sentence For Impaired Driving Offenders In Alberta (1985/86 - 1988/89)

The sentenced admission data in this report pertains to offenders who were convicted and sentenced on impaired driving offences. The actual sentence data represents the sentence given on the most serious impaired driving charge for which the offender was convicted and not the overall aggregate sentence.

The sentence length for impaired driving convictions appears to be steadily increasing (see Figure 23). It is noticeable that the proportion of persons admitted to correctional centres for impaired driving offences with a sentence of under one month has decreased from 67.3% in 1985/86 to 60.8% in 1988/89. A similar decrease, but smaller, also occurred for those persons with a sentence of between 1-3 months, decreasing from 14.8% in 1985/86 to 13.8% in 1988/89. Sentence categories of 3 months and over have all experienced increased usage during the four year period. The largest increase occurred in the 3-6 month sentence category where the proportion of sentenced admissions in this sentence category increased from 12.5% in 1985/86 to 17.9% in 1988/89. The 6-12 month sentence category accounted for 4.8% of sentenced admissions in 1985/86 and 5.3% in 1988/89. The "Over 1 year" sentence category accounted for 0.6% of sentenced admissions in 1985/86 and 2.3% of such admissions in 1988/89 - this is an increase in actual numbers from 22 to 85.

FIGURE 23
SENTENCE STRUCTURE FOR IMPAIRED DRIVING OFFENDERS
ADMITTED TO ALBERTA CORRECTIONAL CENTRES
1985/86 TO 1988/89



Sentence length is affected by both the severity of the offence and the previous record of the offender. It is interesting to note that the gradual increase in the severity of sentencing is coupled with an increase in the treatment requirements for repeat offenders.

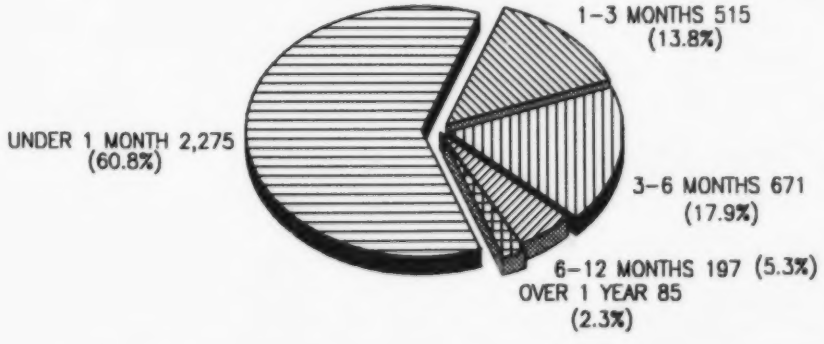
The increase in the severity of sentencing has also been influenced by the 1985 revisions to the Criminal Code of Canada which introduced mandatory jail sentences for second offences. However, it is beyond the scope of this report to detail the effects of such revisions.

Of the 3,743 sentenced admissions during the 1988/89 fiscal year, 2,275 (60.8%) received a custodial sentence of under 1 month (1-29 days) in duration. Of these 2,275 admissions, 2,171 received sentences of under 2 weeks in duration (see Figure 24).

A further 515 (13.8%) sentenced admissions received a custodial disposition of between 1-3 months (30-89 days) and of these 515 admissions, 420 received a disposition of 30-59 days. A sentence of 3-6 months (90-179 days) was given to 671 (17.9%) of the sentenced admissions and a further 197 (5.3%) admissions received sentences of between 6-12 months (180-364 days).

Of all sentenced admissions, 85 (2.3%) received sentences of over 1 year in duration. Of these 85 admissions, 57 received sentences of 1-2 years and 28 received sentences of over 2 years.

FIGURE 24
SENTENCE LENGTH FOR IMPAIRED DRIVING OFFENCES
IN ALBERTA – 1988/89



TOTAL SENTENCED ADMISSIONS FOR IMPAIRED DRIVING OFFENCES = 3,743

D. Number of Persons Treated For Impaired Driving In Alberta (1984/85 - 1988/89)

The information provided in this subsection of the report is derived from the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission.

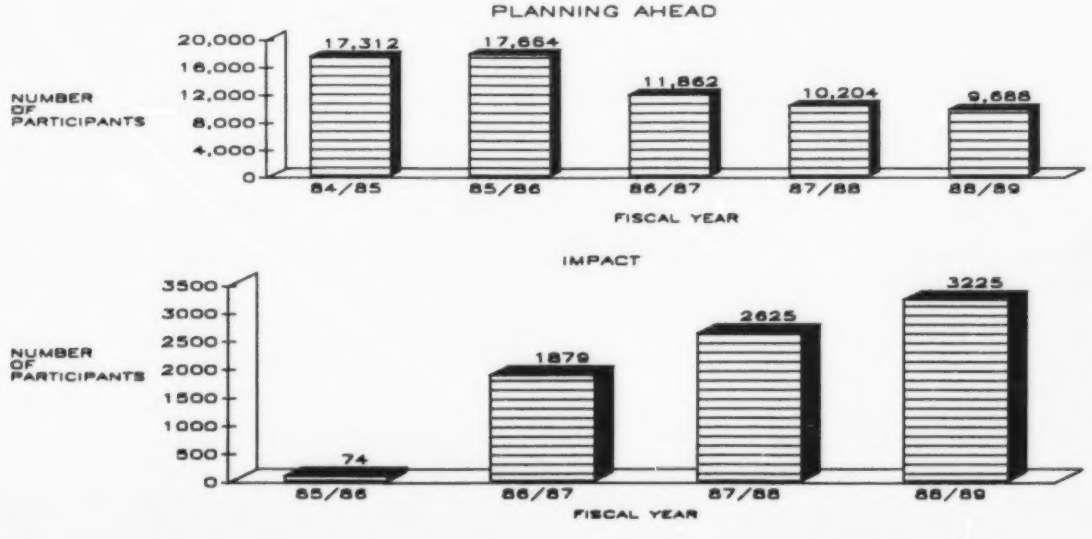
In Alberta, persons convicted of impaired driving offences are required to attend treatment programs operated by the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC) before they are eligible for the reinstatement of driving privileges. First offenders are required to attend a one-day course for impaired drivers entitled "Planning Ahead". Second offenders are required to attend an intensive weekend small group-dynamics counselling session entitled "IMPACT" where they undergo a 48 hour assessment of their use and abuse of, and attitude towards alcohol. (First offenders are those persons who have one impaired driving offence within the past five years. Second offenders are those persons with two or more impaired driving offences within the past five years.)

The number of offenders treated for impaired driving in Alberta has declined from a high in the 1985/86 fiscal year of 17,738 to a low of 12,913 in 1988/89, a 27% decrease (see Figure 25). Within this overall declining trend is another trend reflecting a change in use of the first offender and repeat offender program. The Planning Ahead program has experienced a 44% decrease in participants from 1984/85 to 1988/89. The Planning Ahead program - previously called the Alberta Impaired Drivers Course (AIDC) which treated all impaired drivers - was affected by the implementation of the IMPACT program for repeat offenders in late 1985/86 and the gradual 'phase-in' of that new program.

The IMPACT program participation has grown by 71.6% from 1,879 in 1986/87 - the first full year of treatment-to 3,225 in 1988/89.

As the IMPACT program has become more established, the role of the repeat offender in the impaired driving problem is also becoming increasingly evident.

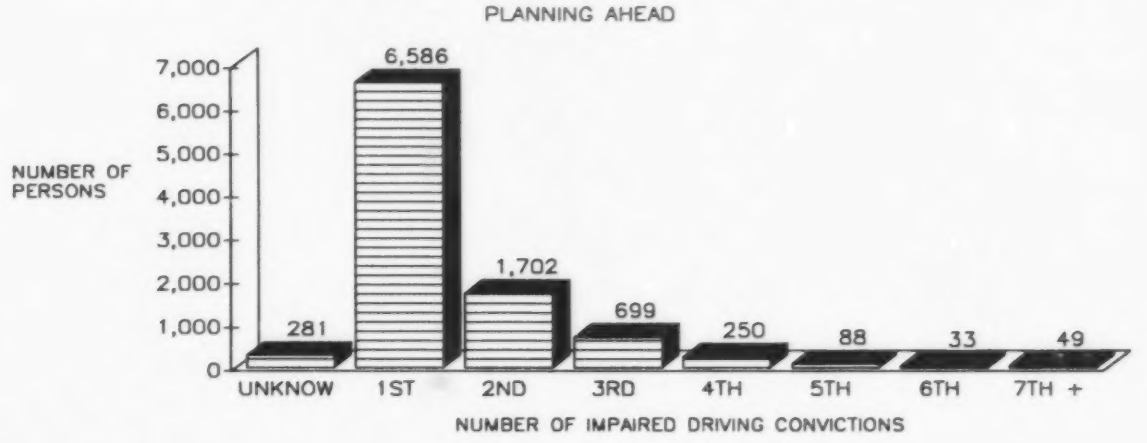
FIGURE 25
NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN AADAC IMPAIRED DRIVER TREATMENT PROGRAMS 1984/85 – 1988/89

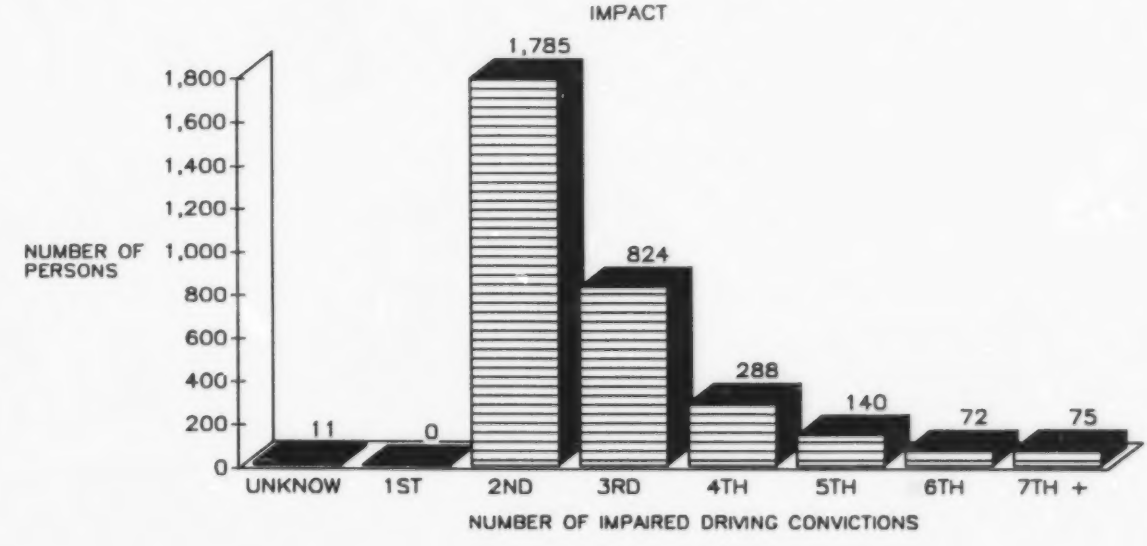


During the fiscal year 1988/89, a total of 9,688 persons participated in the Planning Ahead program. Of these participants, 8,477 (87.5%) were male and 1,211 (12.5%) were female. For the same period, a total of 3,225 persons attended the IMPACT course. Of these participants, 3,195 (99.1%) completed the course and of these successful participants, 3,003 (94%) were male and 192 (6%) were female. In total 12,913 impaired drivers undertook some form of treatment in Alberta during the 1988/89 fiscal year - 75% in the Planning Ahead program and 25% in the IMPACT program.

Although 25% of impaired drivers were classified as repeat offenders (two offences within the past five years) and therefore attended the IMPACT program, in actuality at least 6,005 (46.5%) of the 12,913 impaired drivers that participated in some form of treatment during 1988/89 reported that they had two or more drinking and driving convictions during their lifetime (see Figure 26).

FIGURE 26
NUMBER OF IMPAIRED DRIVING CONVICTIONS REPORTED BY OFFENDERS AT TREATMENT PROGRAMS IN ALBERTA DURING 1988/89





E. Summary

Licence suspensions for impaired driving convictions have been decreasing from 19,795 in 1985/86 fiscal year to 17,160 in the 1988/89 fiscal year, a decrease of 13.3%. One third of such suspensions were for offenders convicted of repeat impaired driving offences.

Sentenced admissions to Alberta correctional centres increased from 1985/86 to 1987/88 by nearly 20% and while experiencing a drop during the 1988/89 fiscal year, were still 6% above the 1985/86 figure. The rate of sentenced admissions per 1000 persons charged has also increased from 1985/86 to 1988/89 by 28.3%. Additionally, it is noticeable that sentences given for impaired driving offences during the four year period have became more severe. Sentenced categories of 3 months and over have all experienced increased usage. The largest increase occurred in the 3-6 month sentence category where the proportion of sentenced admissions in this category increased from 12.5% in 1985/86 to 17.9% in 1988/89.

During the 1988/89 fiscal year, nearly 13,000 impaired drivers undertook some form of treatment in Alberta - this represents a 27% decrease in treatment from the 1985/86 fiscal year. Of those 13,000 drivers, 25% were classified as repeat offenders.

VIII IMPAIRED DRIVER PROFILES

The profiles in this section of the report are based on the demographic data collected by AADAC on first and repeat offenders who enter into their treatment programs and on data provided in the Annual Report completed by the Alberta Department of Transportation and Utilities.

A. Impaired Driving - First Offender

In Alberta, the average impaired driver on a first conviction will be a single male, in his early 20's (20-24 years), who has completed high school but no further post secondary education. If post secondary education has been taken, it will be in vocational training. The typical driver will be either in full-time employment or self-employed in the manufacturing or construction trades.

Typically, a first offender would have had a blood alcohol content of between .11 and .13 (0.08 being the legal maximum) and would have received a driver licence suspension of 6 months. (Note: This profile is based on 1988 data. The Motor Vehicle Administration Act was amended on October 1, 1988 to provide for new suspension periods-as outlined in section III A of this report. As of October 1, 1988 first offenders received a 12 month mandatory licence suspension instead of 6 months.)

Female offenders typically account for only 10-15% of the first offender impaired driving population. They are usually in their 20's with a slightly higher chance of being in the 25-29 age group.

B. Impaired Driving - Repeat Offender

The average repeat offender (at least two impaired driving convictions within the past 5 years) will be a 25-29 year old single male, who has completed his high school education. In 50.2% of cases, no post-secondary education has occurred. If post-secondary education has been taken, it will have been in vocational training. Current employment would be either full-time or self employment in the manufacturing and construction trades ("blue-collar" occupations were recorded as usual occupations for over 90% of repeat offenders).

In 60% of cases, the current conviction is the second drinking and driving conviction; a further 26% had two prior convictions.

Previous attendance at the Planning Ahead program was within the last 2-3 years and which accounted for 35% of cases (68% of cases had attended previous treatment programs within the last four years). The typical offender would not have attended other previous drug and alcohol treatment programs but would be a multiple drug user, using predominantly alcohol (94.5%), tobacco (60%), and marijuana/hashish (39%).

Although the average repeat offender who participated in treatment programs was assessed by the course facilitator as being harmfully involved with alcohol/drugs, a rating on the Alcohol Dependence Scale indicated a low dependence.

Female drivers with a repeat impaired driving conviction accounted for only 6.0% of the total repeat offenders. The average female repeat impaired driving offender would be in the 25-29 age group or older.

C. Impaired Driver Profile - Canada

A review of demographics regarding the impaired driver from a Canadian perspective was conducted using data from the Canadian Department of Justice in their report Impaired Driving (January 1985). The document was prepared by the Traffic Injury Research Foundation of Canada (T.I.R.F.).

The data accumulated for an average individual apprehended for a drinking and driving offence found a first time offender to be a 20-40 year old male who was married, however, the "single" category was a close second. This person would probably be employed in a low status occupational group and have some high school education. There is potential that the driving record indicated more traffic violations and accidents than the normal population and the blood alcohol concentration (B.A.C.) level would have been in excess of .15 at the time of the offence. Personality characteristics considered prominent included hostility, alienation, impulsivity, rebelliousness and an inability to cope successfully with stress or anxiety.

Recidivists (repeat offenders) are usually male, over 21 years old and located within a blue collar occupation. Their B.A.C. level at the time of the offence was normally higher than at first conviction as was their driving record in terms of increased violations/accidents. Persons in this group had normally re-offended within two years of their first offence. As further drinking and driving convictions occurred, the interval time between convictions decreased.

D. Summary

The available demographic data supports the general notion of an impaired driver being a single male in his early to mid 20's, probably employed in a lower status occupational group, with some high school education.

Although, the typical impaired driving offender is in the 20-29 year range, it should be remembered that the 18-21 age group is significantly over represented in the impaired driving population.

IX THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF IMPAIRED DRIVING

Although no attempt can be made to evaluate the cost of human suffering that results from impaired driving collisions, estimates can be made of the economic cost to society from such fatal, injury and property damage collisions.

Figures used in British Columbia in the early 1980's indicated that the 1983 societal cost of traffic collisions per collision victim was: for fatal accidents, a total of $561,062; for serious injuries - $375,767; for moderate injuries - $3,671 and for property damage $1,464.

Using the Canadian Consumer Price indices for 1983 and 1988 to allow for inflation, it is possible to estimate the cost per collision victim (see Table 2).

TABLE 2: ESTIMATED COSTS FOR ALCOHOL RELATED COLLISIONS (1988)

	FATAL	SERIOUS INJURY	MODERATE INJURY	PROPERTY DAMAGE ONLY
Market Loss	$507,766	$303,564	$ 156	----
Family/Community	152,327	91,079	48	----
Medical	1,044	27,277	240	----
Rehabilitation	----	14,563	----	----
Funeral	2,217	----	----	----
Legal	5,561	3,942	335	$ 17
Insurance	708	708	161	161
Law Enforcement	191	191	67	15
Public Liability	9,023	10,164	459	264
Property Damage	9,564	9,564	3,038	1,340
TOTAL	$688,401	$461,052	$4,504	$1,797

X CONCLUSION

Albertans spent over 942 million dollars on alcohol in 1988 and this figure keeps rising annually. Although, the overall consumption of alcohol in the province is falling, Alberta still consumes more than the national average.

The number of traffic collisions in the province appears to be slowly increasing although the number of fatality and injury collisions and the number of actual fatalities and injuries is declining slightly. The number of alcohol related fatality and injury collisions occurring has remained relatively stable over the past five years, although a slight increase in fatalities and a slight decrease in injuries is noticeable. Police reports indicate that about 30% of drivers involved in fatal accidents and 11% of drivers involved in injury accidents had been drinking.

The number of persons charged with impaired driving is declining but controlling for population size, the province still has the highest charge rate of all the provinces. Likewise, the number of driver licences suspended because of an impaired driving conviction is declining.

Contrary to decreases experienced in the number of persons charged with impaired driving, the number of persons sentenced to imprisonment for impaired driving offences is increasing. In addition, these sentences for persons convicted of impaired driving offences appear to be increasing in severity.

The impaired driving problem will continue to exist in Alberta for the foreseeable future. The enormous human suffering and cost to the province supports the Government of Alberta's current initiatives against the problem, and indicates the need to continue the campaign against impaired driving.